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WALK IN THE LIGHT WHILE YE HAVE LIGHT

THOUGHTS AND APHORISMS

LETTERS · MISCELLANIES

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1890

INTRODUCTION

GUESTS were one day assembled in a wealthy house, and a serious conversation on life was started. They spoke of present and of absent people, and they could not find a single man who was satisfied with his life. Not only was there not one man who could boast of happiness, but there was not even one man who thought that he was living as was becoming for a Christian. All confessed that they were living only a worldly life in cares for themselves and for their families, and that not one of them was thinking of his neighbour, and much less of God. Thus the guests spoke among themselves, and all agreed in accusing themselves of a godless, non-Christian life.

"Why, then, do we live thus?" exclaimed a youth. "Why do we do what we do not approve of? Have we not the power to change our life? We know ourselves that what ruins us is our luxury, our effeminacy, our wealth, and, chiefly, our pride, our separation from our brothers. To be noble and rich, we have to deprive ourselves of everything which gives the joy of life to a man. We crowd into cities, make ourselves effeminate, ruin our health, and, in spite of all our amusements, die from ennui and from self-pity, because our life is not such as it ought to be. Why should we live thus? Why ruin our whole life, — all that good which is given us by God? I do not want to live as heretofore! I will abandon all the teaching which I have entered upon, for it will lead me to nothing but the same agonizing life of which we all

now complain. I will renounce my property and will go to the country and live with the poor; I will work with them, will learn to work with my hands; if my education is of any use to the poor, I will communicate it to them, but not through institutions and books, but by living directly with them in a brotherly relation. Yes, I have made up my mind!" he said, looking interrogatively at his father, who was also present.

"Your desire is good," said the father, "but frivolous and thoughtless. Everything presents itself to you as easy, because you do not know life. There are things enough that seem good to us! But the point is, that the execution of what is good is frequently difficult and complicated. It is hard to walk well on a beaten track, and harder still to lay out new paths. They are laid out only by men who have fully matured and who have completely grasped everything which is accessible to men. The new paths of life seem easy to you, because you do not yet understand life. All this is thoughtlessness and pride of youth. We old men are needed for the very purpose that we may moderate your transports and guide you by means of our experience, while you young people should obey us, in order that you may be able to make use of our experience. Your active life is still ahead, — now you are growing and developing. Educate yourself, form yourself completely, stand on your feet, have your firm convictions, and then begin the new life, if you feel the strength for it. But now you should obey those who guide you for your good, and not open new paths of life."

The youth grew silent, and the elder guests agreed to what the father had said.

"You are right," a middle-aged married man turned to the father of the youth, "you are right, when you say that a youth, who has not any experience in life, may make mistakes in looking for new paths of life, and that

his decision cannot be firm; but we have all agreed to this, that our life is contrary to our conscience and does not give us the good; therefore we cannot help but recognize that the desire to get out of it is just. A youth may take his reverie to be a deduction of reason, but I am not a young man, and I will tell you about myself that, as I listened to the conversation of this evening, the same thought came to me. The life which I lead, obviously for myself, cannot give me any peace of mind and the good; this is also shown me by reason and by experience. So what am I waiting for? We struggle from morning until evening for our family, but in reality it turns out that my family and I myself do not live in godly fashion, but sink deeper and deeper in our sins. We do everything for our families, but our families are not better off, because what we do for them is not the good. And so I have frequently thought that it would be better if I changed my whole life and stopped caring for my wife and my children, and began to think of my soul. There is good reason in what Paul says, 'He that is married careth how he may please his wife, and he that is unmarried careth for God.'"

The married man had barely finished his words, when all the women present and his wife began to attack him.

"You ought to have thought of it before," said one of the middle-aged women. "You have put on the collar and so pull! It is easy enough for anybody to come and say that he wants to be saved, when it appears hard for him to keep up and support a family. This is a deception and a rascality! No, a man must be able to live in godly fashion with a family. Of course, it is so easy to be saved all by oneself. Besides, if you do so, you act contrary to Christ's teaching. God has commanded us to love others, while the way you do, you wish for the sake of God to offend others. No one has a right to do violence to his family!"

But the married man did not agree to this. He said:

"I do not want to abandon my family. I only say that the family and the children should not be kept in worldly fashion, so that they get used to living for their lust, as we have just said, but that we should live in such a way that the children should from the earliest time become accustomed to privation, to labour, to aiding others, and chiefly to a brotherly life in respect to all men. But, to attain this, we must renounce aristocracy and wealth."

"There is no need of curbing others, while you do not yourself live in godly fashion!" his wife retorted to this, with irritation. "You yourself lived for your pleasure when you were young, so why do you want to torment your children and your family? Let them grow up quietly, and then, let them do what they please, but do not force them!"

The married man kept silence, but an old man, who was present, took his part:

"Let us admit," he said, "that a married man, who has accustomed his family to certain comforts, cannot suddenly deprive them of them. It is true, if the education of the children has been begun, it is better to finish it than to break up everything, the more so, since the children will themselves choose the path which they will deem best. I admit that for a married man it is hard and even impossible without sinning to change his life. But we old men have been commanded to do so by God. I will tell you about myself: I am living now without any obligations, — I must confess, I am living for my belly only, — I eat, drink, rest, — and I am ashamed and disgusted with myself. It is time for me to give up this life, to distribute my property, and at least before death to live as God has commanded a Christian to live."

But they did not agree with the old man either. Here was his niece and godchild, all of whose children he had

christened and given presents to on holidays, and here was also his son. They all retorted to him.

"No," said his son, "you have worked enough in your life, — it is time for you to take a rest, and not to torture yourself. You have lived for sixty years with your habits, and you cannot stop them. You will only torture yourself in vain."

"Yes, yes," confirmed his niece, "you will be in want, and you will be out of sorts, and you will grumble and sin more than ever. God is merciful and pardons all the sinners, and not only you, such a dear uncle."

"And why should we?" added another old man, who was of the same age as the uncle. "You and I have, perhaps, two days left to live. Why should we begin anew?"

"How wonderful!" said one of the guests, who had been silent during the conversation, "how wonderful! All say that it is good to live in godly fashion, and that we live badly, and that we torment ourselves in body and soul; but the moment it comes to business, it turns out, that the children ought not to be broken in, but that they ought to be brought up, not in godly fashion, but as of old. The young people must not get out from under their parents' will, and they must not live in godly fashion, but as of old; married men must not change the life of their wives and children, and must not live in godly fashion, but as of old; and there is no reason why old men should begin anew, — they are not accustomed to it, and they have but two days to live, and all such things. It turns out that nobody can live well, but that we may only talk about it."

WALK IN THE LIGHT WHILE YE HAVE LIGHT



I.

THIS happened in the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan, 100 Anno Domini. It was at a time when the disciples of Christ's disciples were still alive, and the Christians held firmly to the law of the teachers, as it says in the Acts.

The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: and none of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and great grace was upon their faith. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. (Acts, Chap. IV., 32–35.)

In these first times there lived in the country of Cilicia, in the city of Tarsus, a rich merchant, a Syrian, a dealer in precious stones, Juvenalis by name. He came from simple and poor people, but through labour and skill in his business he gained wealth and the respect of his

fellow citizens. He had travelled much in foreign countries and, though he was not learned, had come to know and understand many things, and the inhabitants of the city respected him for his intellect and justice. He professed the same Roman, pagan faith which was professed by all the respected men of the Roman empire; that faith, the fulfilment of whose ceremonies they had begun strictly to demand from the time of Emperor Augustus and which the present Emperor Trajan himself strictly observed. The country of Cilicia is far from Rome, but it was governed by a Roman supreme officer, and what was done in Rome found its echo in Cilicia, and the governors imitated their emperors.

Juvenalis remembered from his childhood the stories of what Nero had done in Rome, had later seen how the emperors had perished one after another, and, being a clever man, understood that there was nothing sacred in the Roman religion, but that it all was the work of human hands. The senselessness of all the life surrounding him, especially of what was taking place in Rome, where he often went on business, had frequently disturbed him. He had doubts; he could not grasp it all, and he referred it all to his lack of education.

He was married, and he had had four children, but three of them had died in their youth, and there was only one son left, and his name was Julius.

In this Julius Juvenalis centred all his love and all his cares. Juvenalis was particularly anxious to have his son educated in such a way that his son should not be tormented by those doubts concerning life, by which he himself had been troubled. When Julius passed his fifteenth year, his father gave him to be instructed by a philosopher who had settled in their city, and who took youths to instruct them. The father gave him to the philosopher together with his comrade Pamphylius, the son of one of Juvenalis's deceased manumitted slaves.

The youths were of the same age, both handsome, and they were friends.

Both youths studied diligently, and both were of good morals. Julius excelled more in the study of the poets and of mathematics, while Pamphylius excelled in the study of philosophy. A year previous to the end of their instruction, Pamphylius came to school and informed his teacher that his mother, a widow, was going to the city of Daphne, and that he would have to stop studying. The teacher was sorry to lose a pupil who was doing him honour; and so was Juvenalis, but most of all Julius. To all admonitions to stay and continue his instruction, Pamphylius remained imperturbable and, thanking his friends for their love and their cares of him, he parted from them.

Two years passed; Julius finished his studies, and during all that time he had not seen his friend.

Once he met him in the street; he invited him to his house and began to ask him how and where he was living. Pamphylius told him that he was living with his mother in the same place.

"We do not live alone," he said, "but there are many friends with us, and we have everything in common with them."

"How in common?" asked Julius.

"So that none of us considers anything his own."

"Why do you do so?"

"We are Christians," said Pamphylius.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Julius. "But I was told that the Christians killed children and ate them. Is it possible you take part in this?"

"Come and see," replied Pamphylius. "We do not do anything in particular; we live simply, trying to do nothing bad."

"But how can one live without considering anything one's own?"

"We manage to live. If we give our brothers our labour, they give us theirs."

"Well, and if your brothers take your labour, and do not give it back, what then?"

"There are no such," said Pamphylius. "Such people like to live in luxury and will not come to us: our life is simple and not luxurious."

"But are there not many lazy people who will be glad to be fed for nothing?"

"There are such, and we receive them cheerfully. Lately there came to us such a man, a fugitive slave; at first, it is true, he was lazy and lived badly, but he soon changed his manner of life, and is now a good brother."

"But suppose he had not mended his ways?"

"There are such, too. Elder Cyril has said that such we must treat like the dearest brothers, and love even better."

"Is it possible to love good-for-nothing people?"

"One cannot help but love a man!"

"But how can you give to all everything which they ask for?" inquired Julius. "If my father gave to all who ask him for something, he would soon be left without anything."

"I do not know," replied Pamphylius, "but we have enough left for our needs; and if it happens that we have nothing to eat or to cover ourselves with, we ask of others and they give to us. Yes, this happens rarely. It happened but once that I had to go to bed without a supper, and that, too, was so because I was very tired and did not wish to go to a brother to ask him for it."

"I do not know how you do it," said Julius, "only, as my father has told me, if you do not guard what is yours, and if, besides, you give everything to those who ask it, you will yourself starve to death."

"We do not starve. Come and see. We live, and not only do not suffer want, but have enough to spare."

"How is this?"

"It is like this: We all confess the same law, but the force of execution varies in us: one has more, another less of it. One has already perfected himself in the good life, another is only beginning it. At the head of all of us stands Christ with his life, and we all try to emulate him, and in this alone do we see our good. Some, like Elder Cyril and his wife Pelagea, stand ahead of us; others stand behind us; others again are far behind, but all walk on the same path. The leaders are already near to Christ's law, — the renunciation of self, — and have lost their souls, in order to find them. They need nothing; they have no thought of themselves, and the last thing they have they, according to Christ's law, give to him who asks for it. There are others who are weaker, who cannot give up everything; they weaken and have still a thought of themselves; they weaken without the customary food and raiment, and do not give up everything. There are others, who are weaker still, — those who have but lately entered upon the path; they continue to live as of old, retain much for themselves, and give up only what is superfluous. And it is these hindmost people who come to the aid of those in front. We are, besides, all of us by relationship intermingled with the pagans. One has a father who is a pagan and holds property and gives it to his son. The son gives it to those who ask him for it, but the father gives him some again. Another has a pagan mother who pities her son and helps him. A third has pagan children, and their mother is a Christian, and the children solace their mother and give her things, asking her not to distribute them; and she takes them out of love for them, and none the less gives them to others. A fourth has a pagan wife. A fifth has a pagan husband. Thus are all intermingled, and the foremost would be glad to give their last, but are not able to do so. It is this which supports the weak in their faith, and from this a great superfluity is collected."

To this Julius said:

"But if it is so, you evidently depart from Christ's teaching and only make believe. If you do not give up everything, there is no difference between you and us. As I take it, if one is a Christian, he ought to fulfil everything, — give up everything and become a beggar."

"That is best of all," said Pamphylius. "Do so."

"Yes, I will, when I see that you do so."

"We do not wish to show anything, and I advise you not to come to us and not to abandon your life for the sake of appearances; what we do, we do, not for appearances, but according to faith."

"What is meant by according to faith?"

"By according to faith is meant that salvation from the evils of the world, from death, is only in a life according to Christ's teaching. It is all the same to us what people will say of us. We do not do anything for the sake of people, but because in this alone do we see life and the good."

"It is impossible not to live for oneself," said Julius. "The gods themselves have implanted this in us, that we love ourselves more than others and seek pleasures for ourselves. And you do the same. You say yourself that there are some among you who have a thought for themselves. They will be preparing more and more pleasures for themselves and will more and more abandon your faith and will do precisely as we do."

"No," replied Pamphylius, "our people walk along another path and never weaken, but keep growing stronger, just as the fire will never go out so long as wood is put on it. In this does our faith consist."

"I cannot make out in what this faith does consist."

"Our faith consists in this, that we understand life as Christ has explained it to us."

"How has he?"

"Christ told the following parable: Husbandmen were

living in another man's garden and had to pay tribute to their master. It is we, the people, who are living in the world and must pay tribute to God, — to do His will. But those men with their worldly faith thought that the garden was theirs, that they did not need to pay for it, and that all they had to do was to enjoy its fruits. The master sent a messenger to the husbandmen to receive the tribute, but they drove him away. The master sent his son for the tribute, and they killed him, thinking that after that no one would disturb them. This is the worldly faith by which all the men of the world live, when they do not recognize the fact that life is given for the purpose of serving God. But Christ has taught us that the worldly faith, that it is better for a man if he drives the master's messenger and the son out of the garden and does not pay tribute, is a false faith, because one result or the other cannot be avoided, either you pay tribute, or you are driven out of the garden. He has taught us that all the joys, those which we call joys, — eating, drinking, merriment, — can be no joys if life is placed in them; that they are joys only when we seek something else, — the fulfilment of God's will; that only then these joys follow the fulfilment as a true reward. To wish to take the joys without the labour of fulfilling God's will, to tear the joys away from labour, is the same as to tear the stalks of flowers and plant them without roots. We believe in this, and so cannot seek the deception instead of the truth. Our faith consists in this, that the good of life is not in joys, but in the fulfilment of God's will without any thought as to joys or any hope respecting them. And thus we live, and the longer we live, the more we see that the joys and the good, like a wheel following the shaft, come in the wake of the fulfilment of God's will. Our teacher has said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and

lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'"

Thus spoke Pamphylius. Julius listened and his heart was touched, but what Pamphylius had said was not clear to him; it seemed to him that Pamphylius was deceiving him; and he looked again into Pamphylius's good eyes, and it seemed to him that Pamphylius was deceiving himself. Pamphylius invited Julius to come to see him, to inspect their life, and, if he was pleased with it, to remain to live with them.

Julius promised he would come, but he did not go to see Pamphylius; he was carried away by his own manner of life, and forgot Pamphylius.

II.

JULIUS'S father was rich, loved his only son, was proud of him, and spared no money on him. Julius's life passed like that of rich young men: in idleness, luxury, and the amusements of dissipation, which have always been the same, — wine, gaming, and fast women.

But the enjoyments to which Julius abandoned himself demanded more and more money, and Julius began to feel a lack of it. Once he asked his father for more than his father was in the habit of giving to him. The father gave it to him, but also reprimanded him. Feeling himself guilty and not wishing to confess his guilt, his son grew angry and insulted his father, as those always grow angry who know their guilt and do not wish to confess it. The money taken from his father was very soon spent, and, besides, Julius happened at that time to get into a brawl with a companion of his and to kill a man. The chief of the city learned of this and wanted to take Julius under guard, but his father obtained his pardon. Just then Julius needed more money for his dissipations. He borrowed money from a friend, promising to return it to him. Besides, his mistress demanded a present from him: she took a liking for a pearl necklace, and he knew that if he did not fulfil her prayer, she would abandon him and go to live with a rich man who had long been trying to get her away from Julius. Julius went to his mother, and told her that he was in need of money, and that he would kill himself if he did not get as much as he needed.

He did not blame himself, but his father, for the condi-

tion he was in. He said: "My father accustomed me to a life of luxury, and then began to begrudge me the money. If he had given me in the beginning without rebukes what he later gave me, I should have arranged my life and should have had no need; but as he never gave me any sufficiency, I was compelled to turn to usurers, and they squeezed everything out of me; and there was nothing left for me to live on, as is proper for a rich young man, and I am ashamed in the presence of my companions, while my father does not wish to understand anything. He has forgotten that he himself was once a young man. It is he who brought me to this state, and if he does not give me now what I am asking for, I shall kill myself."

The mother, who spoiled her son, went to his father. The father sent for his son, and began to scold him and his mother. The son answered insultingly to his father. The father struck him. The son grasped his father's hands. The father called the slaves and commanded them to bind his son and lock him up.

When Julius was left alone, he began to curse his father and his own life.

His death or the death of his father presented itself to him as the only way out from the condition in which he was.

Julius's mother suffered more than he. She did not try to make out who was to blame for all this. She only was sorry for her beloved child. She went to her husband to implore his pardon. Her husband would not listen to her, rebuked her for having spoiled her son; she rebuked him, and it all ended in the husband beating his wife. But the mother paid no attention to the blows, and went to her son to admonish him to beg his father's pardon and submit to him. For this she promised her son secretly that she would give him the money which he was in need of. Her son agreed, and then the mother

went to her husband and begged him to forgive his son. The father for a long time scolded his wife and his son, but finally decided that he would forgive his son, but only on condition that he would abandon his life of dissipation and would marry a rich merchant's daughter, whom his father wanted to get as a wife for his son.

"He will get money from me and the wife's dowry," said the father, "and then let him begin a regular life. If he promises to do my will, I shall forgive him. But now I will not give him anything, and the first time he transgresses, I will turn him over to the chief."

Julius agreed to everything, and was released. He promised to get married and to abandon his bad life, but he did not have the intention of doing so.

His life at home became a hell for him: his father did not speak to him and quarrelled with his mother on account of him, and his mother cried.

On the following day his mother called him to her apartments and secretly handed him a precious stone which she had carried off from her husband.

"Go and sell it, not here, but in another city, and do what you have to do. I shall know how for a time to conceal this loss, and if it is discovered, I will put the blame on one of the slaves."

The mother's words touched Julius's heart. He was terrified at what she had done and, without taking the precious stone, left the house.

He did not know himself whither he was going, and for what purpose. He walked on and on, away from the city, feeling the necessity of being left alone and reflecting on what had happened to him and on what was awaiting him. As he kept marching on and on, he left the city behind and entered a holy grove of the Goddess Diana. Upon reaching a solitary spot, he began to think. The first thought that came to him was to ask the goddess's aid, but he no longer believed in his gods and so knew that

no aid was to be expected from them. And if not from them, from whom? It seemed too strange to him to reflect on his own situation. In his soul there was chaos and darkness. But there was nothing to be done: it was necessary for him to turn to his conscience, and he began before it to consider his life and his acts; and both seemed bad to him and, above all, foolish. Why had he been tormenting himself so much? Why had he been ruining his youthful years? There were few joys, and much sorrow and unhappiness! But the main thing was, he felt himself alone. Before this he had had a loving mother, a father, and even friends,—now there was nothing. No one loved him! He was a burden to all. He had managed to cross everybody's life: for his mother he was the cause of her discord with his father; for his father he was a spendthrift of his money, which had been collected by the labour of a whole life; for his friends he was a dangerous, disagreeable rival. For all of them it was desirable that he should die.

Passing his life in review, he recalled Pamphylius, and his last meeting with him, and how Pamphylius had invited him to come to them, the Christians. And it passed through his head that he would not return home, but would go to the Christians and would remain with them.

"But is my situation so desperate?" he thought, and he again recalled everything which had happened to him, and again he was frightened at this, that, as he thought, no one loved him and he loved no one. His mother, father, friends did not love him, could not help but desire his death; but did he himself love any one? His friends? He felt that he did not love any one. They were all his antagonists; all were pitiless to him now that he was in misfortune.

"My father?" he asked himself, and he was seized by terror, when, at this question, he looked into his own

heart. He not only did not love him, but even hated him for the oppressions, for the insults. He hated him and, besides, he saw clearly that for his, Julius's happiness, he needed his father's death.

"Yes," he said to himself, "if I knew that no one would ever see or find out, — what would I do, if I could with one stroke, at once, deprive him of life and free myself?"

And Julius answered himself:

"Yes, I should kill him!"

He gave this answer to himself, and he was frightened at himself.

"My mother? Yes, I pity her, but I do not love her; it is all the same to me what will become of her, — all I need is her aid. Yes, I am a beast! and a hunted-down, a baited beast, and I differ from a beast only in this, that I can, by my will, go away from the deceptive, evil life; I can do what a beast cannot, — I can kill myself. I hate my father, I love no one — neither my mother, nor my friends — unless, perhaps, Pamphylius alone."

And he again thought of him. He began to recall the last meeting, and their conversation, and Pamphylius's words as to what Christ said, according to their teaching: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Is it true?

He began to think, to recall the meek, fearless, and joyful face of Pamphylius, and he wanted to believe what Pamphylius had said.

"What am I indeed?" he said to himself. "Who am I? A man searching after the good. I have searched after it in lustful desires and have not found it. And all those who live like me find it as little. All are evil and suffer. But there is a man who is always full of joy, because he is not searching after anything. He says that there are many such, and that all will be such, if they shall follow what their Teacher says. What if this is the

truth? Truth or untruth, — I am drawn toward it, and I shall go."

Thus Julius said to himself, and he left the grove, having decided not to return home, and went toward the village in which the Christians lived.

III.

Julius walked cheerfully and joyously, and the farther he walked and the more vividly he presented to himself the life of the Christians, recalling everything which Pamphylius had said, the more happy he felt. The sun was declining toward evening, and he wanted to rest, when he met a man on the road, who was resting and eating his supper. The man was of middle age, with a bright face. He was sitting, and eating olives and a flat cake. When he saw Julius, he smiled, and said:

"Good evening, young man! The road is still far. Sit down and rest thyself."

Julius thanked him, and sat down.

"Whither dost thou go?" asked the stranger.

"To the Christians," said Julius, and, by degrees, he told the stranger his whole life and his determination.

The stranger listened attentively, asked him about the details, and himself did not express his opinion; but when Julius had ended, the stranger put the remaining food into his wallet, adjusted his clothes, and said:

"Young man, do not carry out thy intention! Thou art in error. I know life, but thou dost not know it. I know the Christians, but thou dost not know them. Listen: I will analyze all thy life and thy thoughts, and after thou hast heard them from me, thou wilt make that decision which will appear to thee most correct. Thou art young, rich, handsome, strong, and the passions are boiling in thee. Thou desirest to find a quiet harbour, where the passions shall not agitate thee and thou wilt not suffer from their consequences, and it seems to thee that thou wilt find

such a harbour among the Christians. There is no such place, dear youth, because what is troubling thee is not to be found in Cilicia, nor in Rome, but in thyself. In the quiet of the country solitude the same passions will torment thee, only a hundred times more powerfully. The deception of the Christians, or their error (I do not want to condemn them), consists in this, that they do not wish to recognize human nature. Only an old man, who has outlived all his passions, may be a complete executor of their teaching. But a man in possession of his strength, or a youth like thee, who has not experienced life and tried himself, cannot submit to their law, because this law has for its basis, not human nature, but the idle speculation of their founder, Christ. If thou shalt go to them, thou wilt suffer what thou sufferest now, only to a far greater extent. Now thy passions lead thee on false paths, but, having once made a mistake in the direction, thou art able to correct thyself; now thou hast at least the satisfaction of liberated passion, that is, life. But among them, thou, violently repressing thy passions, wilt err just as much, even worse, and besides this suffering wilt have the unceasing suffering of man's unsatisfied needs. Let the water out over a dam, and it will water the earth and the meadows, and animals; but hold it back, and it will tear up the earth and run out with dirt. The same is true of the passions. The teaching of the Christians, their teaching in regard to life, consists, besides the beliefs with which they console themselves, and of which I shall not speak, also in the following: they do not recognize violence, wars, courts, or property, or the sciences, arts, — all that which makes life easy and joyous. All this would be well, if all men were such as they describe their teacher to have been. But this is not the case, and this cannot be. Men are evil and are subject to their passions. This play of the passions and the conflicts which result from them hold men back in those con-

ditions of life in which they live. Barbarians (savages) know no repression, and one savage would, for the gratification of his desires, destroy the whole world, if all men should submit as easily as the Christians do. If the gods have implanted the sentiment of anger in men, they have done so because these sentiments are necessary for the life of men. The Christians teach that these sentiments are evil, and that without them men would be happy; there would be no murders, capital punishments, wars. This is true, but it resembles the proposition that for their welfare they must not receive nourishment. Indeed, there would be no greed and hunger and all the calamities which result from them. But still this proposition would not change human nature. And if two or three dozens of men, believing this and actually not taking any food, should starve to death, this would not change human nature. The same is true of the other passions, — indignation, anger, revenge, even love of women, of luxury, of splendour, and of grandeur, are characteristic of the gods also, and so are man's unchangeable properties. Destroy man's nutrition, and man will be destroyed; similarly destroy man's characteristic passions, and humanity will be destroyed. The same is true of ownership, which the Christians are supposed to deny. Look about thee: every vineyard, every enclosure, every house, every she-ass, — all this has been produced by men only under the condition of ownership. Reject the right of ownership, and not one vineyard will be dug up, not one animal will be raised and trained. The Christians assert that they have no property, but they enjoy its fruits. They say that they have everything in common, and that everything is brought together. But what they bring together, they have received from people who own property. They only deceive men and, at best, deceive themselves. Thou sayest that they work themselves, in order to support themselves; but what they get by work would not

support them, if they did not make use of what men who recognize ownership have produced. Even if they could support themselves, they only could sustain their lives, and there would be no place among them for the sciences, nor for the arts. They do not recognize the use of our sciences and arts. Nor can they act differently. All their teaching tends only to bring them back to the primitive state, to savagery, to the animal. They cannot serve humanity by means of the sciences and arts, and, since they do not know them, they deny them. They cannot serve by those means which form man's exclusive property and bring him near to the gods. They will have no temples, no statues, no theatres, no museums. They say that they do not need them. The easiest way not to be ashamed of their baseness is to despise altitude, and this they are doing. Their teacher is an ignoramus and cheat. And they emulate him. Besides, they are godless. They do not recognize the gods and their intervention in human affairs. For them exists only the father of their teacher, whom they also call their own father, and the teacher himself, who, according to their conception, has revealed all the mysteries of life to them. Their teaching is a miserable deception. Consider this: our teaching says that the world exists through the gods and that the gods protect men. But men, to live well, must worship the gods and themselves seek and think, — and so we are guided in our life, on the one hand, by the will of the gods, on the other, by the combined wisdom of all humanity. We live, think, and seek, and so move toward truth. But they have no gods, nor their will, nor human wisdom, but only one thing, the blind belief in their crucified teacher, and in everything which he has said to them. Weigh which guide is more reliable, the will of the gods and the combined, free activity of human wisdom, or the compulsory, blind belief in the words of one man."

Julius was struck by what the stranger had told him, especially by his last words.

His intention of going among the Christians was not only shaken, but it now even seemed strange to him how, under the influence of his troubles, he could have decided upon such madness. But there was still the question open for him what he was to do now and how to get out of those difficult conditions in which he now was, and he told the stranger about his situation and asked his advice.

"I wanted to speak of this very thing," continued the stranger. "What art thou to do? Thy path, in so far as human wisdom is accessible to me, is clear to me. All thy troubles arise from the passions which are characteristic of man. Thou hast been carried away by passion, which took thee so far that thou didst suffer. Such are the usual lessons of life. These lessons must be used to advantage. Thou hast experienced much, and thou knowest where it is bitter and where sweet: thou canst no longer repeat those blunders. Take advantage of thy experience. What grieves thee more than anything else is thy enmity toward thy father. This enmity is due to thy situation; choose another, and it will be destroyed, or, at least, it will no longer manifest itself so painfully. All thy troubles are due to the irregularity of thy situation. Thou hast abandoned thyself to the amusements of youth; this is natural and good. But it was good only so long as it corresponded to thy age. But the time passed and thou didst abandon thyself with the powers of a man to the wantonness of youth, and that was bad. Thou hast reached a time when thou oughtest to become a man, a citizen, and serve thy country, work in its behalf. Thy father proposes to thee that thou shouldst get married. His advice is wise. Thou hast outlived one period of life, youth, and hast entered upon another. All thy tribulations are symptoms of a transitional condition. Recognize that the time of youth has passed and, boldly rejecting what

was proper for it, but not proper for a man, enter upon the new path. Get married, give up the enjoyments of youth, busy thyself with commerce, public affairs, the sciences, and the arts, and thou wilt not only make thy peace with thy father and thy friends, but thou wilt also find peace and joy. The main thing that agitated thee is the unnaturalness of thy situation. Thou hast become a man, and thou shouldst enter into matrimony and be a man. And so my chief counsel is: Do thy father's bidding, get married. If thou art attracted to solitude, which thou hadst intended to find among the Christians, if thou art inclined toward philosophy, and not toward the activity of life, thou canst usefully abandon thyself to this activity only after thou hast learned life in its true significance. This thou wilt know only as an independent citizen and head of a family. If after that thou shalt be attracted to solitude, abandon thyself to it, and then it will be a true attraction, and not an outburst of dissatisfaction, such as it is at present. Then go!"

The last words more than any others convinced Julius. He thanked the stranger and returned home.

His mother received him with joy. His father, too, when he learned of his readiness to submit to his will and to marry the maiden which had been proposed to him, was reconciled with his son.

IV.

THREE months later they celebrated the wedding with beautiful Eulampia, and Julius, having changed his manner of life, began to manage a separate house with his wife, and himself attended to part of the business which his father had turned over to him.

Once he went for his business house to a near-by town, and while he was sitting there in a merchant's shop, saw Pamphylius pass by with a maiden, who was a stranger to him. Both were walking with heavy burdens of grapes, which they were selling. When Julius recognized his friend, he went up to him and asked him to step into the shop, in order to have a chat with him. When the maiden saw Pamphylius's desire to go with his friend and his misgiving about leaving her alone, she hastened to say that she did not need him and would sit alone with the grapes, waiting for purchasers. Pamphylius thanked her and went with Julius into the shop. Julius asked permission of the merchant, his friend, to go into his living-room, and when he had received the permission, retired with Pamphylius to the rooms in the back.

The friends asked one another for the details of their lives. Pamphylius's life had not changed since they had met the last time: he continued to live in the Christian commune, was not married, and assured his friend that his life was getting more and more joyous with every year, day, and hour. Julius told his friend what had happened with him, and how he had been on his way to the Christians, when his meeting with the stranger elucidated to him the errors of the Christians, and his own

duty to get married, and how he had followed the advice and had married.

"Well, art thou happy now?" Pamphylius asked. "Hast thou found in marriage what the stranger promised thee?"

"Happy?" said Julius. "What do you mean by happy? If we are to understand by it a full gratification of my desires, I am naturally unhappy. So far I have been carrying on my business with success, and people begin to respect me; and in either of these things I find a certain satisfaction. Though I see many men who are richer and more honoured than I, I foresee the possibility of coming up to them and even surpassing them. This side of my life is full, but my wedded state, I will say outright, does not satisfy me. I will say more: I feel that this very matrimony, which ought to give me joy, has not given it to me, and that the joy, which I experienced at first, kept diminishing and finally was destroyed; and in the place where there was joy there has grown up sorrow. My wife is beautiful, clever, learned, and good. At first I was entirely happy. But now, — you do not know this, because you have no wife, — there occur causes for discord, because she seeks my love, when I am indifferent to her, and vice versa. Besides, for love we need novelty. A less attractive woman than my wife attracts me more at first, but later becomes less attractive to me than my wife; I have already experienced this. No, I have not found any satisfaction in my married state. Yes, my friend," concluded Julius, "the philosophers are right: life does not give what the soul wishes for. I have experienced this now in matrimony. But the fact that life does not give the good which the soul wishes for does not prove that your deception may give it," he added, smiling.

"In what dost thou see our deception?" asked Pamphylius.

"Your deception consists in this, that you, to liberate a man from the calamities which are connected with the affairs of life, deny all affairs of life, — life itself. To free yourselves from disenchantments you deny the enchantment, marriage itself."

"We do not deny marriage," said Pamphylius.

"If not marriage, you deny love."

"On the contrary, we deny everything but love. It serves us as the first foundation of everything."

"I do not understand thee," said Julius. "From what I have heard from others and from thee, and from the fact that thou art not yet married, though we are of the same age, I conclude that you do not have marriage. Your people continue in the married state, if they entered into it before, but they do not enter anew into wedlock. You do not trouble yourselves about the continuation of the human race. If you were alone, the human race would have long ago come to an end," said Julius, repeating what he had heard many times.

"That is not true," said Pamphylius. "It is true that we do not make it our aim to continue the human race and do not trouble ourselves about it as much as I have many a time heard your sages trouble themselves. We assume that our Father has already taken care of this: our aim consists only in living according to His will. If in His will is the continuation of the human race, it will be continued; if not, it will come to an end; this is not our affair, not our care; our care is to live according to His will. But His will is expressed both in our sermon and in our revelation, where it says that a man should unite with his wife, and there should not be two bodies, but one. Marriage is not only not prohibited among us, but is even encouraged by our old teachers. The difference between our marriage and yours consists in this, that our law has revealed to us that every lustful looking at a woman is a sin, and so we and our women,

instead of adorning ourselves and provoking lust, try to remove ourselves from it so far that the sentiment of love between us, as between brothers and sisters, should be stronger than the sensation of lust for one woman, which you call love."

"But you can still not suppress the love of the beautiful," said Julius. "I am convinced, for example, that that beauty, the maiden with whom thou didst carry the grapes, in spite of her attire, which conceals her charms, evokes in thee the feeling of love for a woman."

"I do not yet know," Pamphylius said, blushing. "I have not thought of her beauty. Thou art the first who has told me of it. She is for me only a sister. But I shall go on with what I wanted to tell thee about the difference between our marriage and yours. The difference originates even from this, that with you lust, under the name of beauty and love and serving Goddess Venus, is sustained, provoked in men. But with us it is the very opposite: lust is not considered an evil (God has not created any evil), but a good, which becomes an evil when it is not in its place, — an offence, as we call it. And this is the reason why I am not yet married, though I may possibly be to-morrow."

"But what will decide it?"

"God's will."

"How dost thou recognize it?"

"If we never look for indications of it, we never find it; but if we look for them constantly, they become clear, as clear as are for you your divinations from sacrifices and birds. And as you have your own sages, who according to their wisdom, and according to the entrails of sacrificial animals, and according to the flight of the birds expound to you the will of the gods, so we have sages who explain to us the will of the Father, according to Christ's revelation, according to the feeling of their hearts and the

thoughts of other men, and, chiefly, according to their love of them."

"But all this is very indefinite," retorted Julius. "What, for example, will show thee when to marry, and whom? When I was about to marry, I had the choice among three maidens: these three were chosen from among others, because they were beautiful and rich, and my father was satisfied if I married any one of them. Of these three I chose Eulampia, because she was to me more beautiful and attractive than the rest; this is natural. But what will guide thee in thy choice?"

"To answer thee," said Pamphylius, "I must tell thee first of all that, since by our teaching all men are equal before their Father, they are just as equal before us, according to their position and to their spiritual and bodily qualities; and so our choice (if this word, which is incomprehensible to us, be used) cannot be limited to anything. A Christian's wife or husband may be chosen among any men or women of the world."

"This makes it even less possible to make up one's mind," said Julius.

"I will tell thee what our elder has said about the difference that exists between the marriage of a Christian and that of a pagan. A pagan, like thee, chooses a wife, who, in his opinion, will afford him, him personally, the greatest amount of enjoyment. But the eyes stray with this, and it is hard to decide, the more so since the enjoyment is ahead. But for a Christian there is no choice for himself, or rather, the choice for his personal enjoyment occupies a secondary, and not the first, place. For a Christian the question is, not to violate God's will by his marriage."

"But where can there be a violation of God's will in the marriage?"

"I might have forgotten the Iliad, which we studied and read together, but thou, who art living among sages

and poets, canst not forget it. What is the whole Iliad? It is a story of the violation of God's will in relation to marriage. And Menelaus, and Paris, and Helen, and Achilles, and Agamemnon, and Chryseis, — all that is a description of all the strange calamities which arise for men and even now take place from this violation."

"But wherein does the violation consist?"

"The violation consists in this, that a man loves in woman his enjoyment from being near her, and not the human being like himself, and so enters into matrimony for the sake of his enjoyment. Christian marriage is possible only when a man has love for men and when the object of his carnal love is first of all an object of this brotherly love of man for man. Just as it is rational and safe to build a house only when there is a foundation, to paint a picture when everything on which it is to be painted is prepared, — so carnal love is legitimate only when it has respect and love of one man for another at its base. On this foundation alone can a rational Christian family life be reared."

"But I still fail to see why such a Christian marriage, as thou callest it," said Julius, "excludes the love for a woman, which Paris experienced."

"I do not say that the Christian marriage does not admit the exclusive love of woman; on the contrary, only then is it rational and sacred; but the exclusive love of woman can arise only when the formerly existing love toward all men has not been violated. But the exclusive love for one woman, which the poets extol, recognized as good in itself, without being based on the love of men, has no right to be called love. It is an animal lust and frequently passes over into hatred. The best examples of this, that the so-called love (eros), if it is not based on brotherly love for all men, becomes bestiality, are the cases of violence committed against the very woman, whom he who violates her makes suffer and

whose ruin he causes. In violence there is evidently no love for a man, if he tortures him whom he loves. But with the non-Christian marriage there is frequently concealed violence, when he who marries a maiden, who does not love him, or who loves another, makes her suffer and has no compassion on her, only that he may be able to satisfy his love."

"Let us say that this is so," said Julius, "but if the maiden loves him, there is no injustice, and I do not see any difference between a Christian and a pagan marriage."

"I do not know the details of thy marriage," answered Pamphylius, "but I know that every marriage, which has for its basis nothing but the personal good, cannot help but be the cause of discord; even as the simple taking of food, among animals and among men who differ little from animals, cannot take place without quarrelling and fighting. Everybody wants a dainty morsel, but as there are not enough dainty morsels to go around, discord results from this. If there is no open discord, there is one which is concealed. The weak individual wants a dainty morsel, but he knows that the strong one will not give it to him, and, although he knows the impossibility of taking it away directly from the strong individual, he looks with concealed, envious malice upon the strong man and uses the first opportunity to take it away from him. The same is true of pagan marriage, only it is twice as bad, because the object of hatred is man, so that there arises discord between the married pair."

"But how can this be effected, that the married pair should love no one but one another? There will always be found a man or a maiden who loves some one else. And so, according to your opinion, marriage is impossible. And so I see that they say rightly of you that you do not marry at all. That is the reason why thou art not married and, probably, wilt not be. It cannot be that a man should marry a woman without having first

roused the feeling of love for himself in another woman; or that a girl should live to maturity without having roused a feeling in a man. How was Helen to have acted?"

"Elder Cyril says of this as follows: in the pagan world, men, without thinking of the love of their brothers, without cultivating this sentiment, think only of one thing, of the provocation of a love of passion for woman, and they cultivate this passion. And so in their world every Helen, or one like her, arouses love in many. Rivals fight with one another, try to surpass one another, like animals, in order to get possession of a female. And in a greater or lesser degree, their marriage is an act of violence. In our community we not only do not think of the personal enjoyment of beauty, but we avoid all offences which lead to this, and which in the pagan world are made a merit and a subject of worship. We, on the contrary, think of those obligations of respect and love of our neighbour, which we have without distinction for all men, for the greatest beauty and for the greatest ugliness. We cultivate this feeling with all our strength, and so the feeling of love has for me the upper hand in us over the temptation of beauty and vanquishes it and destroys the discord, which results from the sexual relations. A Christian marries only when he knows that his union with the woman causes no one any harm."

"But is this possible?" retorted Julius. "Can we control our infatuations?"

"We cannot, if we give them full sway, but we can prevent their awakening and getting up. Take as an example the relation of father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister. The mother is for her son, the daughter for her father, the sister for her brother, no matter how beautiful they may be, not an object of personal enjoyment, but of love, and no sensations are awakened. They would awaken, if the father should find out

that the one he considered to be his daughter is not his daughter, and the same in the relation of mother and son, brother and sister; but even then this sensation would be very feeble and submissive, and it would be in man's power to control it. The feeling of lust would be weak, because at the base of it is the sentiment of love for mother, daughter, sister. Why dost thou not wish to admit that the same sentiment may be educated and confirmed in man in relation to all women, just as in the case of the mothers, sisters, daughters, and that on the basis of this sentiment there may grow up the sentiment of conjugal love? The moment a brother has discovered that the one whom he regarded as his sister is not his sister, he allows in himself the feeling of love, as for a woman; even so a Christian, feeling that his love is not offending any one, allows this sentiment to rise in his soul."

"Well, and if two men fall in love with the same maiden?"

"Then one sacrifices his happiness for the happiness of another."

"But if she loves one of them?"

"Then he whom she loves less sacrifices his sentiment, for her happiness."

"Well, and if she loves both alike, and both sacrifice themselves, she does not marry at all?"

"No, then the elders will look into the matter, and counsel in such a way that there shall be the greatest good for all, with the greatest love."

"But this is never done, and it is not done because it is contrary to human nature."

"Contrary to human nature? What human nature? Man, besides being an animal, is also a man, and it is true that such a relation to woman is not in accord with man's animal nature, but it is with his rational nature. And when he uses his reason in order to serve his animal

nature, he does worse than an animal, — he rises to violence, to incest, — which no animal would do. But when he uses his rational nature for the restraint of the animal, when his animal nature serves his reason he attains that good which satisfies him."

V.

"But tell me about thyself personally," said Julius. "I see thee with this beauty; thou evidently livest near her and servest her; dost thou really not wish to become her husband?"

"I have not thought of it," said Pamphylius. "She is the daughter of a Christian widow. I serve them just as others do. Thou didst ask me whether I love her so much as to wish to be united with her. This question is hard for me; but I shall answer it frankly. This thought has come to me, but there is a youth who loves her, and so I do not yet dare to think of it. This youth is a Christian and loves us both, and I cannot commit an act which would grieve him. I live without thinking about it. I seek but for this, to fulfil the law of love of men, — this is all that is needed. I shall marry when I see that that is necessary."

"But the acquisition of a good, industrious son-in-law cannot be a matter of indifference to her mother. She will wish for you, and not for others."

"No, it makes no difference to her, because she knows that, besides me, all our people are ready to serve her, as they would any one else, and I shall serve her neither more nor less, no matter whether I shall be her son-in-law or not. If from this shall result my marriage with her daughter, I shall accept it with joy, as I shall accept her marriage to some one else."

"That cannot be!" exclaimed Julius. "What is so terrible among you is, that you deceive yourselves. And thus you deceive others. That stranger told me correctly

about you. As I listen to thee, I involuntarily submit myself to the beauty of the life which thou describest to me; but when I reflect, I see that all this is a deception, which leads to savagery, to coarseness which approaches that of animals."

"In what dost thou see this savagery?"

"In this, that supporting yourselves by work, you have no leisure or chance to busy yourselves with the sciences or the arts. Here thou art in a ragged garment, with coarsened hands and feet; thy companion, who might be a goddess of beauty, resembles a slave. You have neither any songs to Apollo, nor temples, nor poetry, nor games,— nothing which the gods have given for the adornment of human life. To work, to work like slaves or like oxen, only in order to feed coarsely, is this not a voluntary and godless renunciation of will and of human nature?"

"Again human nature!" said Pamphylius. "But in what does this nature consist? In torturing slaves by giving them work beyond their strength, in killing our brothers and making them slaves, in making of women a subject of amusement? All this is needed for that beauty of life, which thou considerest proper to human nature. Does man's nature consist in this, or in living in love and concord with all men, feeling himself a member of one universal brotherhood? Thou art very much mistaken, if thou thinkest that we do not recognize the sciences and art. We value highly all the abilities with which human nature is endowed; but we look upon all of man's inherent abilities as upon means for the attainment of one and the same end, to which we devote all our life, namely, the fulfilment of God's will. In science and in art we do not see an amusement, of use only as a pleasure for idle people; we demand from science and art the same that we demand from all human occupations,— that in them should be realized the same activity of love of God and our neighbour, by which all the acts of a

Christian are permeated. We recognize as true science only such knowledge as helps us to live better, and we respect art only when it purifies our designs, elevates our souls, strengthens our powers, which are necessary for a life of labour and of love. Such knowledge we, in proportion as we are able, do not fail to develop in ourselves and in our children, and to such art we gladly devote ourselves in our time of leisure. We read and study the writings bequeathed to us by the wisdom of men who have lived before us; we sing psalms, paint pictures, and our poems and pictures brace our spirit and console us in moments of grief. It is for this reason that we cannot approve of those applications which you make of the sciences and arts. Your learned men use their ability of imagination to invent new means for causing evil to men; they perfect the methods of war, that is, of murder; they invent new methods for gain, that is, for getting rich at the expense of others. Your art serves you for the erection and adornment of temples in honour of the gods, in whom the most advanced among you have long ago ceased believing, but you encourage this faith in them in other people, assuming that with this deception you will best retain them in your power. You erect statues in honour of the most powerful and cruel of your tyrants, whom nobody respects, but all fear. In your theatres you give representations of criminal love. Your music serves for the enjoyment of your rich, who glut themselves with food and drink at their feasts. And your painting, which adorns houses of debauchery, is such that a man who is not intoxicated by animal passion cannot even look upon without blushing. No, not for this have those higher abilities, which distinguish him from the animal, been given to man. It is not right to make of them an enjoyment for our bodies. In devoting all our lives to the fulfilment of God's will, we so much the more employ our highest abilities in the same service."

"Yes," said Julius, "all that would be beautiful, if life under such conditions were possible; but it is not possible to live thus. You deceive yourselves. You do not recognize the defence we provide. But if the Roman legions did not exist, would it be possible to live calmly? You make use of the defence, without acknowledging it. Even some of your people, so thou didst tell me thyself, have defended themselves. You do not recognize property, but you make use of it: our people have it, and give it to you. Thou wilt not thyself give thy grapes away, but sellest them and wilt buy them. All this is deception! If you did what you say, it would be all right; but as it is, you deceive others and yourselves."

Julius grew excited and said everything which he had on his mind. Pamphylius waited in silence. When Julius had ended, Pamphylius began to retort:

"In vain dost thou think that, though we do not recognize your defences, we make use of them. We do not need the Roman legions, because we do not ascribe any value to what demands a defence by means of violence. Our good consists in what does not demand any defence, and this no one can take from us. Though material things, which in your eyes represent property, pass through our hands, we do not regard them as our own, and give them to those who need them for their sustenance. We sell the grapes to those who will buy them, not for the sake of personal gain, but with the one purpose of acquiring what the needy want. If any one should wish to take these grapes away from us, we should give them up without resistance. For the same reason we are not afraid of the incursion of savages. If they should begin to take from us the products of our labour, we should let them have them; if they should demand that we should work for them, we should do so with pleasure, and they would not only have no cause, but would even find it unprofitable, to kill and torture us.

The savages would soon comprehend, and would love us, and we should have less to suffer from them than from those enlightened men of yours, who are about us now and who persecute us. It is said that only thanks to the right of ownership are all those products obtained, by which men subsist and live; but, reflect thyself, by whom are all the necessary articles of life produced? Thanks to whose labour do you accumulate that wealth, on which you pride yourselves? Is it produced by those who, folding their hands, command their slaves and hirelings, and are the only ones who enjoy the property? or by those poor slaves who, for the sake of bread, fulfil the commands of their master and themselves enjoy no property, receiving as their share barely enough for their daily sustenance? And why do you think that these men will stop working, when they shall have the possibility of doing rational labour, useful to themselves, for themselves and for those whom they love and pity? Thy accusations against us consist in this, that we do not fully attain what we strive after, that we do not even recognize violence and ownership, and yet make use of them. If we are cheats, there is no sense in talking with us, and we deserve neither anger nor arraignment, but only contempt, and this we gladly accept, because one of our rules is the recognition of our insignificance. But if we sincerely strive after what we profess, then thy accusations about our deception would be unjust. If we strive as do my brothers and I, in order to fulfil the law of our teacher, after living without violence and the ownership which results from it, we strive after it, not for external purposes, wealth, power, honours, — we recognize none of these things, — but for the sake of something else. We seek the good just as you do; the only difference is, that we see the good in something different. You believe that the good is in wealth and honours, but we believe differently. Our faith shows us that our good

is not in violence, but in obedience; not in wealth, but in giving everything up. And, like plants striving after the light, we cannot help but strive after that where our good is. We do not fulfil everything we wish for our good, that is true. But can this be otherwise? Thou strivest after having the most beautiful wife, after having the largest possessions, — hast thou, or has any one else, ever reached it? If a marksman does not strike the target, does he stop aiming at it, because he has many times missed his aim? The same is true of us. Our good, according to Christ's teaching, is in love. We seek our good, but each one of us attains it variously and far from completely."

"Yes, but why do you not believe all human wisdom, and why have you turned away from it and believed only your crucified teacher? Your slavery, your submission to him, it is this that repels me."

"Again thou art mistaken, and he is mistaken who thinks that we, in professing our teaching, have our faith only because the man whom we believe has commanded us to have it. On the contrary, those who with their whole soul seek the knowledge of the truth, the communion with the Father, those who seek the good, involuntarily come to the path on which Christ walked, and so involuntarily stand behind Him, see Him in front of them. All those who love God will meet on this path, and thou, too. He is the son of God and a mediator between God and men, not because some one told us so and we believe in it blindly, but because all those who seek God find His son before them, and involuntarily, only through Him, understand, see, and know God."

Julius made no reply, and for a long time sat in silence.

"Art thou happy?" he asked.

"I wish for nothing better. But, more than this: I for the most part experience a feeling of perplexity, a con-

sciousness of some injustice, — because I am so very happy," said Pamphylius, smiling.

"Yes," said Julius, "maybe I should be happier, if I had not met the stranger then, and had reached you."

"If thou thinkest so, what keeps thee back?"

"And my wife?"

"Thou sayest that she is inclined toward Christianity, — so she will go with thee."

"Yes, but the other life has been begun, — how is it to be broken up? It has been begun, it has to be finished," said Julius, presenting to himself the dissatisfaction of his father, mother, friends, but mainly those efforts which have to be made in order to make this change.

Just then the maiden, Pamphylius's companion, walked up to the door of the shop with a young man. Pamphylius went out to them, and the young man, in Julius's presence, told them that he had been sent by Cyril to buy hides. The grapes were all sold, and wheat was bought. Pamphylius proposed to the young man that he should go with Magdalen and take the wheat home, while he himself would buy and bring the hides.

"It will be better for thee," he said.

"No, Magdalen had better go with thee," said the young man, and departed.

Julius took Pamphylius into the shop of a merchant he knew. Pamphylius filled the wheat in bags and, having given Magdalen a small part, threw his heavy burden over his shoulder, bade Julius good-bye, and left the town with the maiden. At the turn of the street Pamphylius looked around and, smiling, shook his head to Julius and, smiling in the same way, and even more joyously, at Magdalen, he said something to her and they disappeared from view.

"Yes, I should have done better, if I had reached them then," thought Julius. And in his imagination, alternating, arose two pictures, that of powerful Pamphylius with

the tall, strong maiden, carrying baskets on their heads and their good, bright faces, and now his domestic hearth, which he had left in the morning and to which he would return, and the pampered, beautiful, but wearisome and unpleasant wife, in fine raiment and bracelets, lying on rugs and pillows.

But Julius had not time to think: merchants, his companions, came up to him, and they began their habitual occupation, which ended with a dinner with drinking, and at night with women.

VI.

TEN years passed. Julius did not meet Pamphylius again, and the meetings with him slowly passed out of his mind, and the impressions of him and of the Christian life wore off.

Julius's life went its usual way. During this time his father died, and he had to take upon himself the whole business. . The business was complicated: there were the usual purchasers; there were sellers in Africa, clerks, debts to be collected and to be paid. Julius was involuntarily drawn into his affairs, to which he devoted all his time. Besides, there appeared new cares. He was chosen to a public office, and this new occupation, which tickled his vanity, was attractive to him. Besides commercial affairs, he attended to public matters, and, as he possessed a good mind and the gift of words, he began to push to the front, so that he was able to attain a high public position. In the course of these ten years a significant and disagreeable change had taken place in his domestic affairs. Three children were born to him, and this birth of the children separated him from his wife. In the first place, his wife lost the greater part of her beauty and freshness; in the second, she busied herself less with her husband. All her tenderness and affection were concentrated on her children. Though the children, according to the custom of the pagans, were turned over to wet-nurses and attendants, Julius frequently found them with their mother, or did not find her in her apartments, but in those of her children, and the children generally annoyed Julius, affording him more displeasure than joy.

Being busy with his mercantile and public affairs, Julius abandoned his former life of dissipation, but he still needed, as he assumed, an elegant rest after his labours, and this he did not find with his wife, the more so since during this time his wife cultivated more and more the acquaintance of her Christian slave, and more and more was carried away by the new teaching, and rejected in her life everything external, pagan, which had formed her charm for Julius. As he did not find in his wife what he wanted, he cultivated the acquaintance of a woman of easy behaviour and with her passed those hours of leisure which he had left from his occupations.

If Julius had been asked whether he was happy or not, during these years of his life, he would have been unable to answer.

He was so busy! From one affair and pleasure he passed to another affair or pleasure, but not one of them was such that he was fully satisfied with it, or that he wished to continue it. Every affair was such that the quicker he could free himself from it, the better it was for him; and not one pleasure was such that it was not poisoned by something, that the tedium of satiety was not mixed in with it.

Thus Julius lived, when an event happened to him which almost changed the whole manner of his life. He took part in the races at the Olympian games, and, in bringing his chariot successfully to the goal, suddenly drove into another chariot, which he had overtaken. A wheel broke, and he fell down and broke two ribs and an arm. His injuries were severe, but not serious. Julius was carried home, and he had to lie in bed for three months.

During these three months, amidst severe physical sufferings, his mind began to work, and he had leisure to think about his life, looking upon it as that of an outsider. And his life presented itself to him in a gloomy light, the

more so since at that time there happened three unpleasant events, which pained him sorely. The first was, that his slave, his father's trusted servant, having received some precious stones in Africa, had run away with them, thus causing a great loss and a disorganization in Julius's affairs. The second was, that Julius's concubine had left him and had chosen another protector. The third and the most disagreeable event for him was this, that during his illness took place the election to the governorship, a position which he had hoped to get, but to which his rival was chosen. All this, it seemed to Julius, had happened, because his chariot had gone one finger's breadth too much to the left.

As he was lying all alone on his bed, he began involuntarily to think of how his life depended on the most insignificant accidents, and these thoughts brought him to others, and to the recollection of his former misfortunes, — of his attempt to go to the Christians and of Pamphylius, whom he had not seen for ten years. These recollections were intensified by his conversations with his wife, who now stayed with him frequently during his illness and told him everything she knew about Christianity from her slave. This slave had at one time lived in the same community with Pamphylius, whom she knew. Julius wished to see this slave, and when she came to his couch, he asked her in detail about everything and especially about Pamphylius.

"Pamphylius," the slave told him, "was one of the best brothers, and was loved and respected by all." He was married to that same Magdalen, whom Julius had seen ten years before. They had already several children.

"Yes, the man who does not believe that God has created men for their good," concluded the slave, "needs only go and look at their life."

Julius dismissed the slave and, when left alone, buried himself in thought concerning everything which he had

heard. He felt ashamed, when he compared his life with that of Pamphylius, and he wanted not to think of it.

To distract himself, he picked up a Greek manuscript, which his wife had laid down before him, and began to read. In the manuscript he read as follows:

"There are two ways, — one is the way of life, and the other the way of death. The way of life consists in this: In the first place, thou shalt love God, who has created thee; in the second place, thy neighbour as thyself; and what thou dost not wish to have done to thee, do not to another. The teaching which is included in these words is as follows: Bless those who curse you; pray for your enemies, and fast for your persecutors, for what reward is there, if ye love those who love you? Do not the pagans do likewise? Love those who hate you, and ye will have no enemies. Remove yourselves from carnal and from worldly lusts. If a man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, and thou shalt be perfect. If a man compel thee to walk a mile, walk with him two; if a man take from thee what is thine, do not ask it back, for thou canst not; if a man take thy upper garment, give him also thy shirt. To all who ask, give, and demand not back, for the Father wishes that all should receive of His gifts of grace. Blessed is he who gives according to the commandment!

"The second commandment of the teaching: Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not fornicate, nor steal, nor divine, nor poison, nor covet that which is thy neighbour's. Swear not, bear not false witness, speak not evil, remember not evil. Be not double in thought, nor double of tongue. Let not thy word be false, nor idle, but in conformity with the fact. Be not greedy, nor avaricious, nor hypocritical, nor evil-mannered, nor haughty. Have no evil intentions against thy neighbour. Have no hatred for any man, but arraign some, pray for others, and others again love more than thy soul.

"My child! Avoid every evil and everything like it. Be not angry, for anger leads to murder; nor jealous, nor quarrelsome, nor irritable, for from all this comes murder.

"My child! Be not lustful, for lust leads to fornication; be not foul of speech, for from this comes adultery.

"My child! Do not lie, for lying leads to stealing; be not greedy, nor vain, for from all this comes stealing.

"My child! Be no murmurer, for this leads to blasphemy; nor bold, nor evil-minded, for from all this comes blasphemy. But be meek, for the meek shall inherit the earth. Be long-suffering and merciful, and kindly, and humble, and good, and always tremble at the words which thou shalt hear. Exalt not thyself in spirit, and give no boldness to thy soul. Let not thy soul cleave to the proud, but converse with the righteous, and with the humble. Accept everything which may happen with thee as good, knowing that nothing can be without God.

"My child! Cause no divisions, and reconcile those who quarrel. Extend not thy hand to receive, and close it not at giving. Waver not in giving and, giving, murmur not, for thou shalt find out who is a good giver of rewards. Turn not away from the needy, but in everything have communion with thy brother, and call nothing thine own property, for if ye are participants in the imperishable things, ye are so much the more in perishable things. From childhood teach thy children the fear of God. Command not thy slaves in anger, lest they cease to fear God, who is above both of you, for He comes not to call, judging by persons, but calls those whose spirit He has prepared.

"And the way of death is as follows: first of all it is evil and cursed, — here are murder, adultery, lust, fornication, stealing, idolatry, sorcery, poisoning, rape, false witness, hypocrisy, double-mindedness, cunning, pride, malice, haughtiness, avarice, foul speech, envy, impudence, conceit, vanity; here are the persecutors of the good, the

haters of truth, the lovers of lying, who acknowledge no retribution for righteousness, nor cleave to good, nor to righteous judgment, watchful, not of the good, but of evil, from whom are removed humbleness and patience; here are also the lovers of vanity, the seekers of rewards, who have no compassion for their neighbours, who labour not for the oppressed, who know not their Creator; murderers of children, ruiners of God's image, who turn away from the needy, oppressors of the oppressed, defenders of the rich, unlawful judges of the poor, sinners in all things! Beware, children, of all such people."

Long before Julius had read the manuscript to the end, there happened with him, what happens with people who read a book, that is, another person's thoughts, with the sincere desire for the truth; he entered with his soul in communion with those who had inspired these thoughts. He read, guessing in advance what would be, and not only agreed with the thoughts of the book, but seemed himself to have expressed them.

With him happened that common, most mysterious, most significant phenomenon in life, unnoticed by many, which consists in this, that the so-called live man becomes alive, when he enters into communion, unites into one, with the so-called dead, and lives one life with them.

Julius's soul united with him who wrote and inspired these thoughts, and after this communion he examined himself, his life. And he himself and his whole life appeared to him as one terrifying mistake. He did not live, but with all his cares about his life and with the temptations only ruined in himself the possibility of the true life.

"I do not want to ruin my life,—I want to live, to walk on the path of life," he said to himself.

He recalled everything Pamphylius had told him in their former conversations, and all that now appeared to him so clear and so indubitable that he was surprised

how he could have believed the stranger at that time and been kept from fulfilling his intention, — of going to the Christians. He recalled also what the stranger had told him:

"Go there, when thou hast experienced life."

"Well, I have experienced life and have found nothing in it."

He also recalled the words of Pamphylius, that, no matter when he would come to them, they would be glad to receive him.

"Yes, I have erred and suffered enough!" he said to himself. "I shall give up everything, and I shall go and live with them, as it says here."

He told his thought to his wife, and she was delighted at his intention. His wife was ready for everything. The only question was how to carry it out. What was to be done with the children? Were they to be taken along, or to be left with their grandmother? How were they to be taken? How could they, after the tenderness of their bringing up, be subjected to all the difficulties of a stern life? The slave proposed to go with them. But the mother was afraid for her children, and said that it would be better to leave them with their grandmother and go alone. And to this they agreed.

Everything was decided upon, and only Julius's sickness retarded the execution of their plans.

VII.

In this mood Julius fell asleep. Next morning he was told that a skilful physician, who was passing through the city, wished to see him, promising to cure him soon. Julius gladly received the physician. The physician was no other than the same stranger whom Julius had met as he was on his way to the Christians. The physician examined his wounds, and prescribed to him potions of herbs to strengthen him.

"Shall I be able to work with my hand?" asked Julius.

"Oh, yes! Direct the chariot, write, yes."

"But hard work, — digging?"

"I have not thought of it," said the physician, "because this will not be needed in thy position."

"On the contrary, I shall need it very much," said Julius; and he told the physician that since he had seen him he had followed his advice and had experienced life; but life had not given him what it had promised, but, on the contrary, had disenchanted him, and that now he wished to carry out the intention of which he had spoken then.

"Yes, they have evidently put their whole deception into practice, and have enchanted thee in such a way that in thy position, with those obligations which lie upon thee, especially in relation to the children, thou dost none the less not see their error."

"Read this," was all Julius said, handing him the manuscript which he had read.

The physician took the manuscript and looked at it.

"I know this," he said, "I know this deception, and I marvel how such a learned man as thou art can fall into such a trap."

"I do not understand thee. In what does the trap consist?"

"The whole question is in the life, and they, these sophists and rioters against men and gods, offer a happy way of life, in which all men shall be happy; there will be no wars, no capital punishment, no poverty, no quarrels, no malice. And they assert that such a condition of men will exist when all men shall fulfil Christ's commandments, — when they shall not quarrel, nor fornicate, nor swear, nor offer violence, nor wage war upon one another. But they deceive us in that they take the aim for the means. The aim is not to quarrel, not to swear, not to fornicate, and so forth, and this aim is attained only by means of the public life. But they say very nearly what a teacher of shooting might say: 'Thou wilt hit the target, if thy arrow shall fly in a straight line to the target.' But the problem is, how to do so that it may fly in a straight line. And this problem is attained in shooting by the stringing of the string, the flexibility of the bow, the straightness of the arrow. The same is true of the life of men. The best life of men, in which there is no need for quarrelling, fornicating, killing, is attained by having a string, — the rulers, — the flexibility of the bow, — the strength of power, — and a straight arrow, — the justice of the law. But they, under the pretext of a better life, destroy everything which has improved life. They recognize neither government, nor power, nor laws."

"But they assert that without rulers, power, or laws we can live better, if men shall fulfil Christ's law."

"Yes; but what guarantees that men will fulfil it? Nothing. They say, 'You have experienced life with power and laws, and life did not become perfect; now

experience the absence of power and of laws, and life will become perfect; you have no right to deny this, because you have not experienced it.' But it is here that the sophistry of the godless people becomes obvious. Saying this, do they not say the same that a man would say to a farmer? 'Thou sowest in the ground and coverest the seed, and yet the crop is not such as thou desirest; I advise thee, sow in the sea, and it will be better; and thou hast no right to deny my proposition, because thou hast not tried it.'"

"Yes, that is true," said Julius, who was beginning to waver.

"But this is not enough," continued the physician. "Let us assume what is insipid and impossible: let us assume that the foundations of the Christian teaching can be communicated to all men by the taking of certain drops, and that suddenly all men will fulfil Christ's teaching, loving God and their neighbours and fulfilling the commandments. Let us assume this, and yet the path of life according to their teaching will not stand scrutinizing. There will be no life, and life will come to an end. Their teacher was a young vagabond, and such will be his followers, and, according to our supposition, the whole world. Those who live now will continue living, but their children will not, or only one in ten will remain living. According to their teaching, all children must be equal to every mother and to every father, both one's own children and those of strangers. How will these children be saved, when we see that the whole passion, the whole love, for these children, which is implanted in the mothers, will scarcely keep the children from destruction; what will happen when this passion passes into compassion, which is equal for all children? Who is to be taken, and what child is to be saved? Who will sit up nights with a sick, ill-smelling child, if not its mother? Nature has made a protection for the child in the love of its

mother; they take it away and put nothing in its place. Who will teach the son? Who will comprehend his soul, if it is not his father? Who will ward off danger from him? All this is done away with! The whole life, that is, the continuation of the human race, is done away with."

"This too is true," said Julius, carried away by the physician's eloquence.

"Yes, my friend, leave thy raving and live rationally, especially now, when upon thee lie such great, important, and real obligations. It is a matter of honour that you carry them out. Thou hast lived up to the second period of thy doubts, but go on, and there will be no more doubts. Thy first and most indubitable duty is the education of thy children, whom thou hast neglected: thy duty toward them consists in making of them most worthy servants of thy country. The existing political structure has given thee everything thou hast, and thou shouldst serve it thyself and give it worthy servants in the persons of thy children. Thy second duty is to serve society. Thy failure has grieved and disenchanted thee, — this is a temporary accident. Nothing is given without struggle, and the joy of the triumph is strong only when the victory has been difficult. Leave it to thy wife to amuse herself with the prattling of Christian writers; but be thyself a man and educate thy children to be men. Begin thy life with the consciousness of duty, and all thy doubts will fall off by themselves. They have come to thee anyway from your morbid state. Fulfil thy duty in relation to thy country by serving it and by preparing thy children for this service. Put them on their feet, that they may be able to take thy place, and then peacefully abandon thyself to the life which attracts thee, but until then thou hast no right to it; and if thou didst devote thyself to it, thou wouldst find nothing but suffering."

VIII.

EITHER the medicinal herbs or the counsels of the wise physician acted upon Julius, and he soon braced up, and his thoughts about the Christian life appeared to him wild ravings.

The physician remained a few days, and then went away. Julius got up soon after, and, taking advantage of his counsels, began a new life. He engaged teachers for his children and himself watched their studies. He passed his own time in public affairs, and soon attained great importance in the city.

Thus Julius lived a year, and during this time he did not even think of the Christians. But, at the expiration of a year, a court was held in his city to judge the Christians.

A lieutenant had arrived in Cilicia from the Roman emperor for the purpose of crushing the Christian propaganda. Julius had heard of the measures taken against the Christians, and, assuming that this had no reference to the Christian community in which Pamphylius was living, did not give it any thought. But once, as he was walking over the forum to the place of his business, he was accosted by a middle-aged, poorly clad man, whom he did not recognize at first: this was Pamphylius. He walked up to Julius, leading a boy by his hand.

"Good morning, friend," Pamphylius said to him. "I have a great request to make of thee, but I do not know whether thou wilt, during the present persecutions of the Christians, recognize me as thy friend, and whether thou

art not afraid to lose thy place by keeping company with me."

"I am not afraid of any one," replied Julius, "and in proof of it, I beg thee to go with me to my house. I shall even miss my business at the forum in order to speak with thee and be useful to thee. Come with me! Whose child is this?"

"He is my son."

"Really, I ought not to have asked thee. I recognize thy face in him, and I recognize these blue eyes, and I need not ask who thy wife is: it is that beauty whom I saw several years ago with thee."

"Thou hast guessed it," replied Pamphylius. "Soon after thou sawest her with me, she became my wife."

The friends entered Julius's house. Julius called out his wife and gave her the boy, and himself led Pamphylius into his luxurious, secluded room.

"Here thou mayest say everything, — no one will hear us," said Julius.

"I am not afraid if I am heard," replied Pamphylius. "My request even does not consist in this, that the Christians who have been taken should not be judged and executed, but only that they should be permitted openly to confess their faith."

And Pamphylius told him that the Christians who had been seized by the authorities had sent word about their condition to their community. Elder Cyril, knowing of Pamphylius's relations to Julius, had commissioned Pamphylius to go and intercede for the Christians. The Christians were not asking to be pardoned: they regarded the witnessing to the truth of Christ's teaching as their calling. They could bear witness to this by a long life of eighty years, or prove it even by their martyrdom. Either was a matter of indifference to them, and carnal death, which was inevitable, was equally devoid of terror and full of joy for them, whether now or in fifty years; but

they wished their life to be useful to men, and so sent Pamphylius to beg that the judgment and the execution should be public."

Julius was surprised at Pamphylius's request, but promised that he would do everything in his power.

"I have promised thee my aid," said Julius, "but I promise it to thee in consideration of my friendship for thee and that especial, good feeling of meekness which thou hast always evoked in me; but I must confess that I consider your teaching senseless and harmful. I can judge of this, because I myself lately, in a moment of disenchantment and sickness, during my dejection of spirit, shared your views and came very near abandoning everything and joining you. I know whereon your error is based, because I have myself passed through it, — on the love of self, on the weakness of spirit, and on morbid feebleness; it is a faith for women, and not for men."

"But why?"

"Because, while you recognize that in human nature lies dissension and violence, which results from dissension, you do not wish to take part in them and to teach them to others, and, by not doing your share, you do not wish to make use of the structure of the world, which is based on violence. Is this just? The world has always existed with rulers. These rulers have taken upon themselves the whole labour and the whole responsibility, and have protected us against external and internal enemies. And in return for this, we, the subjects, have submitted to these rulers, have bestowed honours upon them, or have aided them in their service. But you, instead of participating with your labours in the affairs of state, and in the measure of your deserts rising higher and higher in the estimation of men, have, in your pride, at once recognized all men to be equal, in order that you may not consider any one higher than yourselves, but may consider yourselves equal to Cæsar. You think so yourselves and

you teach others so. And for feeble-minded and lazy people this offence is great! Instead of labouring, every slave will at once regard himself as equal to Cæsar. But more than that: you deny the tribute, and slavery, and the courts, and executions, and war, — everything which holds men together. If men obeyed you, society would fall to pieces and we should return to the time of savagery. You preach in the state the destruction of the state. But your very existence is conditioned by the state. If that did not exist, neither would you. You would all be the slaves of the Scythians or of wild men, the first that should know of your existence. You are like an ulcer which destroys the body, but which can appear and feed only on the body. And the living body struggles with it and crushes it! It is this that we are doing with you, and we cannot help but do so. And in spite of my promise to help thee in the fulfilment of your desire, I look upon your teaching as very harmful and base: base, because I consider it dishonest and unjust to gnaw the breast which feeds thee! It is base to make use of the benefits of the structure of the state and, without taking part in this structure, by which the state is supported, to destroy it!"

"In thy words," said Pamphylius, "there would be much that is just, if we really lived as thou thinkest. But thou dost not know our life, and hast formed a wrong impression about it. Those means for subsistence, which we employ for ourselves, are obtainable without the aid of violence. It is hard for you, with your habits of luxury, to form an idea how little a man needs in order to exist without privations. A man is so constructed that in a healthy state he can with his hands earn much more than what he needs for his own subsistence. But by living together, we are able, with the work in common, without any effort to sustain our children, and our old men, and the sick, and the feeble. Thou sayest of the rulers that they defend men against outer and inner

enemies, — but we love our enemies, and so we have none. Thou affirmest that we, the Christians, provoke in the slave the desire to be a Cæsar; we, on the contrary, both in word and in deed preach one thing, — patient humility and labour, the lowest kind of labour, — the labour of the working man. We know nothing and understand nothing about affairs of state; we know this much, and this we know indubitably, that our good is only there where the good of other men is, and we seek this good; the good of all men is in union, but union is not obtained through violence, but through love. The violence of a robber against a passer-by is as provoking to us as the violence exerted by an army over captives, by judges over those who are to be punished, and we cannot consciously take part in either. We cannot without labour make use of violence. Violence is reflected in us, but our participation in violence does not consist in applying it, but in bearing it humbly, when exerted against us."

"But tell me, Pamphylius, why are people hostile to you, and why do they persecute, drive, and kill you? Why does your teaching of love lead to dissension?"

"The cause is not in us, but in you. We put above everything else the divine law, which governs our conscience and reason. We can comply only with those laws of state which are not contrary to the divine laws: 'To Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and to God the things which are God's.' And it is for this that men persecute us. We are not able to stop this hostility against us, because we cannot forget the truth, which we have come to comprehend; we cannot begin to live contrary to our conscience and to our reason. Of this hostility which our faith provokes in others against us, our teacher has said: 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword!' Christ has experienced this hostility Himself, and he has warned us, His disciples, more than once of it: 'The world hateth

me,' He said, 'because the works thereof are evil. If ye were of the world, the world would love you; but because ye are not of the world, but I have freed you from the world, therefore the world hateth you. The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.' But, like Christ, we are not afraid of those who kill the body, and so they can do nothing more with us. 'And this is their condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' There is no reason for losing courage on account of this, because the truth prevails. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice and follow him, because they know his voice. And Christ's flock does not perish, but grows, drawing new sheep toward itself from all the countries of the earth, for, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.'"

"Yes," Julius interrupted him, "but are there many among you who are sincere? You are frequently accused of pretending that you are martyrs, and that you are glad to perish for the truth, but the truth is not on your side. You are proud madmen, who destroy all the foundations of social life!"

Pamphylius made no reply, and looked sadly at Julius.

IX.

WHILE Julius was saying this, Pamphylius's little son came running into the room and pressed close to his father's side.

In spite of all the affection of Julius's wife, he ran away from her and came to his father's side. Pamphylius drew a sigh, patted his son, and rose up, but Julius held him back, asking him to stay for dinner and talk with him longer.

"I am surprised," said Julius, "at your having married and had children. I cannot understand in what way you Christians can, in the absence of property, educate your children. How can your mothers live calmly, knowing that your children are not provided for?"

"Why are our children provided for less than yours?"

"Because you have no slaves and no property. My wife is very much inclined toward Christianity, and at one time she even wanted to abandon this life,—this was six years ago. I wanted to go with her: but first of all she was frightened by that uncertainty, that want, which presented itself for her children, and I could not help but agree with her. That was during my sickness. At that time all my life was loathsome to me and I wanted to give everything up. But my wife's fears and, on the other hand, the elucidations by my physician, who cured me, persuaded me that the Christian life, as you lead it, is possible and good for those who have no families, but that there is no place in it for married people, for mothers with children, and that with life as you understand it, life, that is, the human race, must come to

an end. And this is quite true. Therefore thy appearance with thy child is particularly surprising to me."

"Not only one child; at home are left a suckling babe and a three-year-old girl."

"Explain to me how this is done. I do not understand it. Five years ago I was ready to give everything up and to join you; but I had children, and I understood that, no matter how well it would be for me, I had no right to sacrifice my children, and so I remained living as before, in order to bring them up under the conditions in which I myself grew up and lived."

"It is strange," said Pamphylius, "how differently we judge! We say, If grown persons live in a worldly fashion, this may be forgiven, because they are already spoiled, but for children, — that would be terrible! To live with them in the world and to offend them! 'Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!' Thus says our teacher, and I do not say this for a retort, but because it is really so. The chief need of living in such a way as we all live results for us from this, that among us there are children, those beings of whom it is said, 'Unless ye be as children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of God.'"

"But how can a Christian family be without any definite means?"

"According to our faith, there is but one means, the work of love for men, while yours is violence. It may be destroyed, as wealth is destroyed, and then only work and the love of men is left. We consider that what is the foundation of everything, that we must hold on to, and that we ought to increase. And when this exists, the family lives and even prospers. Yes," continued Pamphylius, "if I had any doubts as to the veracity of Christ's teaching and wavered in its execution, these doubts and waverings of mine would have ended at once,

if I thought of the lot of the children who are brought up by the pagans under conditions in which thou hast grown up and bringest up thy children. No matter how we may arrange life with palaces, slaves, and the imported productions of foreign countries, the life of the majority of men remains what it ought to be. The only provision for life will always be the love of men and labour. We want to free ourselves and our children from these conditions, and not by means of violence, but with love, do we make men serve us, and, strange to say, the more we think we secure ourselves in this manner, the more we deprive ourselves of the true, natural, and safe provision, of love. The greater the power of the ruler, the less love there is for him. The same is true of the other provision, of labour. The more a man frees himself from labour and becomes accustomed to luxury, the less able he becomes to labour, the more he is deprived of the true and eternal provision. And these conditions, under which men place their children, they call provisions! Take thy son and mine, and send them both to find the way, to give an order, to do what is necessary, and thou wilt see which of the two will do better; and try to have the two educated by others: whom will they take more readily? No, do not say those terrible words, that the Christian life is possible only for the childless. On the contrary, it may be said: it is pardonable only for the childless to live a pagan life. But woe unto him that shall offend one of these little ones!"

Julius was silent.

"Yes," he said, "maybe thou art right, but the education of the children has been begun, and the best teachers teach them. Let them learn everything we know, — no harm can come from it. There is still time for me and for them. They can come to you, when they shall have strength and shall find it necessary. But I can do so later after I have put my children on their feet and am left free."

"Know the truth, and ye shall be free," said Pamphylius. "Christ gives full liberty at once; the worldly teaching will never give it."

And Pamphylius went away with his son.

The execution was public: Julius saw there Pamphylius, as he, with other Christians, was taking away the bodies of the martyrs.

He saw him; but, fearing the higher authorities, he did not go up to him and did not call him up.

X.

ANOTHER twenty years passed. Julius's wife had died. His life proceeded in the cares of a public activity, in the search after power, which now was given him, and now escaped from him. His fortune was great and kept increasing.

His sons were grown up: his second son more especially began to lead life on a broad scale. He made holes in the bottom of the bucket in which the fortune accumulated and, in proportion as the fortune grew, the leaks also were increased. Here began Julius's struggle with his sons, precisely such as had been his with his father: there were malice, hatred, jealousy.

At that time a new chief deprived Julius of favour. Julius was abandoned by his former flatterers, and exile awaited him. He went to Rome, to make explanations; he was not admitted, and was ordered to return home.

Upon returning he found his son with dissipated youths. The rumour had spread in Cilicia that Julius had died, and the son was celebrating the death of his father. Julius was beside himself, and struck his son so hard that he fell down as one dead. Then Julius went to his wife's apartments. There he found the Gospel, in which he read: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

"Yes," thought Julius, "He has been calling me for a

long time. I did not believe Him and was insubmissive and evil, and my yoke was heavy and my burden evil."

Julius sat for a long time with the open Gospel on his knees, reflecting on his whole past life, and recalling everything which Pamphylius had told him at different times. Then Julius arose and went to his son, whom, to his surprise, he found on his legs, and he was inexpressibly happy, because he had not injured him by his blow.

Without saying a word to his son, Julius went out into the street and walked in the direction of the Christian community. He walked the whole day and in the evening stopped for the night at the house of a peasant. In the room which he entered lay a man. At the noise of steps the man arose. It was the physician.

"No, now thou shalt no longer dissuade me," exclaimed Julius. "I am now going there for the third time, and I know that only there shall I find rest."

"Where?" asked the physician.

"With the Christians."

"Yes, maybe thou wilt find rest, but thou hast not fulfilled thy duty. There is no manliness in thee: thy misfortunes vanquish thee. Not thus do real philosophers act. Misfortune is only a fire in which the gold is tested. Thou hast passed through the crucible. Now thou art wanting, and now thou fleest! It is now that thou oughtest to test men and thyself. Thou hast acquired true wisdom, and this thou oughtest to use for the good of thy country. What would happen to the citizens, if those who have come to know men, their passions and conditions of life, instead of sharing their knowledge, their experience, in behalf of society, should bury it in their search after peace? Thy wisdom of life has been acquired in society, and thou oughtest to give it to the same society."

"But I have no wisdom! I am all in error! Though my errors are old, they have not on that account been changed to wisdom, just as water, no matter how old and foul it may be, will not be changed to wine."

Thus spoke Julius, and, seizing his cloak, he hurriedly left the house and without rest continued his journey. At the end of the next day he arrived at the community of the Christians.

He was welcomed by them, though they did not know that he was a friend of Pamphylius, who was beloved and respected by all. At the table Pamphylius saw his friend, and he ran up to him with joy and embraced him.

"Here I have come," said Julius. "Tell me what to do, and I shall obey thee."

"Have no thought of it," said Pamphylius. "Come with me."

And Pamphylius took Julius to the house where the newcomers stopped, and, pointing a bed out to him, he said:

"Thou wilt see thyself wherewith thou canst serve people, when thou hast had a chance to see our life; but, that thou mayest know how to dispose of thy leisure, I shall appoint thee some work for to-morrow. They are now gathering the grapes in our vineyards: go and help them. Thou wilt thyself find out where thy place is."

On the next morning Julius went into the vineyard. The first was a young vineyard, which was laden with clusters of grapes. Young people were gathering them. All the places were occupied, and Julius could not find any place there for himself, though he walked up and down the vineyard for a long time. He went farther, where there was an older vineyard, and where there was less of the fruit; but even here Julius found nothing to do: all worked in pairs, and there was no place for him. He went farther still, and entered an overgrown vineyard.

It was all empty. The vines were blasted and crooked, and, as Julius thought, barren.

"So this is my life," he said to himself.

"If I had come the first time, it would have been as the fruit of the first vineyard. If I had come when I started for the second time, it would have been like the fruit of the second vineyard; but here is my life now: it is like these useless, overgrown vines, which are good for fuel only."

And Julius was frightened at what he had done; he was frightened at the punishment which awaited him for having wasted his life to no purpose. And Julius was grieved, and he said aloud:

"I am not good for anything and cannot do anything now."

And he did not rise from the spot, and wept because he had lost what could no longer be returned. And suddenly he heard an old man's voice, which called him:

"Labour, my brother!"

Julius looked back, and he saw an old man, bent with years, white as snow, who with difficulty moved his feet. He was standing at a vine and collecting the sweet clusters which were left here and there. Julius walked over to him.

"Labour, dear brother! Labour is joyful!"

And he showed him how to look for the clusters which were left here and there. Julius went to look for them and he brought some and deposited them in the old man's basket. And the old man said to him in reply:

"See whether these clusters are worse than those collected in the other vineyards! 'Walk in the light, while ye have light,' our master has said. 'It is the will of Him that sent me that every man who seeth the son and believeth on Him should have everlasting life, and I will bring him to life at the last day. For God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world: but that the

world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.' Grieve not, my son! We are all sons of God and His servants! We are all His army! Dost thou think he has no other servants but thee? And what if thou hadst, in thy full strength, devoted thyself to His service, — shouldst thou have done everything He wants, everything that ought to be done to men in order to establish His kingdom? Thou sayest that thou shouldst have done twice, ten times, a hundred times as much. But if you did a million times as much as all other men, what would this be in God's work? Nothing. There is no limit and no end to God's work, as there is not to God. Come to Him, and be not a labourer, but a son, and thou shalt become a participator of infinite God and His work. There is no great and no small with God, but there is what is straight and what is crooked. Enter the straight path of life and thou shalt be with God, and thy work will be neither small nor great, but the work of God. Remember that in heaven there is more joy on account of one sinner than of a hundred righteous. The worldly affairs, all that which thou hast missed, have only shown thee thy sin, — and thou hast repented. And since thou hast repented, thou hast found the straight path; walk on it with God, and think not of the past, of what is greater and what lesser. For God all the living are equal! There is one God and one life!"

And Julius calmed down, and began to live and to

work for his brothers according to his strength and the best he knew how. And thus he lived in joy for another twenty years, and did not see how he died a carnal death.

Yásnaya Polyána, October, 1890.

THOUGHTS AND APHORISMS

Collected from L. N. Tolstóy's Private Correspondence, by D. R. Kudryâvtsev

1886 – 1893

THOUGHTS AND APHORISMS[1]

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LETTER FROM L. N. TOLSTÓY TO D. R. KUDRYÁVTSEV

DEAR BROTHER: — I received your book and read it partly with pleasure, recalling those trains of thought and those sentiments which I experienced, when I expressed the thoughts which are contained in it, and partly with annoyance and sorrow, because I have expressed so obscurely what I wanted to express.

I have for a long time been struggling with vanity and egoism, and have conquered these to such an extent that I no longer experience a disagreeable sensation at the thought that I shall be condemned for my too bold, thoughtless, and frequently insufficiently grounded expression of my thoughts, the more so, since I agree with you that here and there something from what you have collected may be of use to men.

I should never have thought of publishing this book, but, once it is out, I have nothing against it, and only thank you for the sympathy which you express.

Affectionately,

L. TOLSTÓY.

[1] From this collection extracts previously given are omitted. — *Translator's Note.*

I.

RELIGION

1

THE whole misunderstanding is based on this, that, speaking of religion, the positivists understand by it something quite different from what I do and what Confucius, Lao-tse, Buddha, Christ, have said about it.

According to the opinion of the positivists, it is necessary to invent, or at least to think out, a religion, and it is necessary to think out such a religion as will have a good effect upon men and will agree with science, and will combine and embrace everything and, warming up people and encouraging them to do good, will not impair their lives.

But I understand (I flatter myself with the hope that I am not alone in this) religion quite differently.

Religion is the consciousness of those truths which are universally accessible to all men, in all their situations, at all times, and are as indubitable as that two times two are four.

The business of religion is to find and express these truths, and when this truth is expressed, it will inevitably change the life of men; and so what the positivists call a scheme is not at all an arbitrary assertion by anybody, but an expression of those laws which are always unchangeable and are felt by all men.

The business of religion is like geometry.

The relation of the sides to the hypotenuse has always

existed, and men always knew that there was some kind of a relation between them; but Pythagoras pointed it out and proved it, and this relation became the possession of all men. But to say that the scheme of morality is not good, because it excludes other schemes, is the same as saying that the theorem of the relation of the sides to the hypotenuse is not good, because it impairs the other false conceptions.

It is not right to reject Christ's scheme (as they say), or the truth (as I say), on the ground that it does not fit in with the invented religion of humanity and excludes the other schemes (as they express it), or the lie (as I call it); it can be rejected only by proving that it is not the truth.

Religion is not composed of a conglomerate of words which may act well upon people; religion is composed of simple, apparent, clear, indubitable moral truths, which are separated from the chaos of false and deceptive judgments; and such are the truths of Christ.

If I found such truths in Katkóv, I should involuntarily accept them at once.

On this lack of comprehension of what I, and all other religious men, consider religion to be, and on the desire to put in place of it a definite form of a propaganda, is all misunderstanding based.

2

What for us forms the whole meaning of life, our faith, is known by many; but, unfortunately, very few know that this is not merely the chief, but even the only thing, and that it is not right to speak of it with adornments and elegance.

It is not right to speak of it; it has to be wept over with tears, and when these sincere tears are wanting, it is not right to speak of it on purpose,—it is not right to desecrate it with a frivolous touch.

3

In Kingsley there is a beautiful philosophical explanation of the *Son*, — the idea of a man, righteous for himself, for God. In order to be such a righteous man, it is necessary to be insulted, tortured, hanged, hated by all, and yet righteous.

4

(From the Vedas)

Be they horses, cows, elephants, — everything which lives, walks, swims, and flies; everything which even does not move, like the trees and the grass, — all that is the eyes of Reason.

Everything is formed by Reason. The universe is the eyes of Reason, and Reason is its foundation. Reason is the one existence.

Man, by surrendering himself to Reason and its service, leaves this world of phenomena and enters into a blissful and free world and becomes immortal.

5

Confucius does not mention Mang-Ti, the personal God, but always speaks only of heaven. Here is his relation to the spiritual world. He is asked, "How are we to serve the deceased spirits?"

He said: "Since you do not know how to serve the living, how shall you serve the dead?"

They asked him about death.

"Since you do not know life, why do you ask about death?"

He was asked whether the dead knew of our serving them.

He said: "If I answered that they do know, I am afraid that you would ruin your lives serving them. If I told you that they do not know, I am afraid you would entirely forget about them. You have no cause to know

what the dead know. There is no need of it. You will know everything in its proper time."

There were many thieves then. They asked him how to be freed from them.

"If you yourselves were not greedy, you would pay them money, and they would stop stealing."

They asked him whether it is right to kill the bad for the benefit of the good.

"Why kill? Let your wishes be good. The highest is just like the wind, and the lowest like the grass. The wind blows, and the grass bends. The whole question is what and whom to consider the highest.

"To consider the highest is to raise, to respect the good.

"To consider the lowest is to drop, to despise the evil without any compromise."

6

The uncertainty as to what awaits us ahead, beyond the limit of our spiritual vision, this uncertainty, this mystery, is the only possibility of our life, because it secures the forward movement.

We walk, as it were, through an underground passage and see ahead of us the illuminated point of the exit; but that we may reach this exit, ahead of us, in front of us must be an emptiness.

The eternal life is eternal for the very reason that it deploys before us infinitely. If it were completely unfolded before us, and we could comprehend it here, in our temporal, carnal existence, it would not be the eternal life, as there would be nothing left beyond it.

7

People generally think little about the meaning of the memory in connection with the life of the spirit, and yet it has a great, and even a mysterious meaning.

During his carnal life, a man only occasionally reaches that elevation of comprehension which alone gives the meaning and true joy of his life.

This condition is not uninterruptedly maintained in our soul. It bursts forth from time to time and illumines our path, as though by disconnected flashes of another, higher life. Why is this so? Why do we not always maintain ourselves on that height of spiritual illumination to which we have risen?

This is due to the defect of memory.

Something distracts our attention and we forget. When we again rise to that height, we recall the former occasions when we were in the same condition, and then all the former illuminations of our spirit blend for us into the one, true life outside time and space. Then the offences of the carnal life again distract our attention, and we again disappear from the sphere of the true life and forget it. In respect to the true life we fall into a state of thoughtlessness, from which we again awaken, when with the new elevation of the spirit memory returns to us.

Now, with our carnal existence, this phenomenon presents itself to us in the form of memory; but when we leave the limits of the carnal life, that which is in the memory will be life itself.

8

Repentance is connected with spiritual growth, just as the breaking of the shell is connected with the hatching of the birdling.

The breaking of the egg or the seed is necessary for the germ to begin to grow and be subjected to the action of air and light. The breaking of the egg is, at the same time, a consequence of the growth of the germ.

The same is true of repentance.

If there is no repentance, there is no forward movement.

If there is no advancing movement, there is no repentance.

9

We all forget that Christ's teaching is not a teaching like that of Moses, of Mohammed, and like all other human teachings, that is, a doctrine of rules to be executed. Christ's teaching is a gospel, that is, a teaching of the good.

He who is thirsty, let him go and drink.

And so, according to this teaching it is impossible to prescribe to any one, to rebuke any one for anything, to condemn any one.

"Go and drink, if thou art thirsty," that is, take the good which is revealed to us by the spirit of truth.

Can one be ordered to drink?

Can one be ordered to be blessed?

Even so a man cannot be rebuked for not drinking, or for not being blessed, nor can he be condemned. The one thing that Christians can do, and always have done, is to feel themselves blessed and to wish to communicate the key of blessedness to other people.

10

Above all else, I do not understand what is meant by the words, "living Christ."

We call Christ a man who lived and died eighteen hundred years ago, but in respect to whom there formed itself the tradition, as it has been formed in respect to many other men, that he arose from the dead. But we know that people cannot rise from the dead, or fly to heaven, as people tell of Christ.

What, then, is meant by the words, "living Christ?"

If they designate this, that his teaching is alive, the expression is awkward and unwonted (we do not say,

"the living Socrates, the belief in the living Socrates"), and it is one of those expressions which ought to be avoided, because with the existing superstition about Christ's resurrection this expression may be taken in the sense of confirming the miracle of the resurrection.

But if by the words, "living Christ," we are to understand that he invisibly, like those spirits imagined by the spiritualists, is present in our lives, we must define how this *Christ's spirit* is to be understood, whether as one of many such spirits, or, as the church theology understands Christ, as God, — as the second person.

In the first case, this will be an arbitrary and useless conception; in the second, this will inevitably lead us, if not to all, at least to the chief propositions of the church theology.

The words, "living Christ," demand an explanation and evoke questions, to which it is necessary to answer:

Who is he, God or not God?

If he is God, in what relation does he stand to God the Creator?

When was he created?

Why was he made incarnate?

The answers to these questions will inevitably bring us to, "born, uncreated before all time, through whom all has been," to the fall of the angel, to the fall of Adam, or to the invention of one's own theology.

And I think that you will agree with me that none of these is desirable.

And why should it be so?

Why must I imagine that a dead man is alive, or assert that a man is God, when I know that this is not only an untruth, but also a useless and senseless assertion of what is impossible, because he who is alive cannot be dead, and a man cannot be God.

Will it be easier for me to attain the good life, if I introduce into my world-conception such an insipidity?

I think the very opposite is true.

You will ask me, "How then are we to understand Christ? Are we to understand him just like any other simple man?"

"By all means," will I reply, "like any other simple man." This is indispensable, in the first place, because it is the truth; in the second place, because without the admixture of miracles and the assertion of the resurrection the teaching is in itself so true, so simple, so attractive, so universal, that there is no man, no matter of what nationality he may be, who has any ground for not accepting it. But with the assertion of the resurrection of the Master, I, without any necessity, add to a great teaching a trite, contemptible invention, which can only repel the majority of men from it. In the third place, it is indispensable for this reason also, that Christ's teaching is important and necessary as the teaching of a man who is precisely like us; it is important to us all, because he, being precisely a man like us, has shown us how each of us may live well.

Is it possible that if the Master has shown me by example and by instruction how I must live and then has left me, it will be more useful for me to imagine that the teacher is invisibly present in my life and aiding me, than for me to try according to my strength to live as he has shown me how?

In the fourth place, it is also indispensable for me to imagine Christ as a simple man, because the conception of him as a God veils, minimizes, and frequently completely obliterates the relation of man to the one God the Father, whereas in this does the whole essence of Christ's teaching consist. Thus, for the sake of what is superfluous to Christ, his exaltation to the dignity of God, I emasculate his teaching and distort it, that is, deprive myself of the very thing in the name of which I extol him so much.

Is it possible that the terrible experience of those churches that recognized Christ as God and, in consequence of it, arrived at a complete negation of the essence of his teaching, is not a sufficient lesson for us, to keep us from blundering on the same path?

The main thing is, it is an untruth, and all know this.

Christ is for me, yes, pardon it, and for you, too, and for all men, not what we have imagined him to be, but what he is in reality, a great teacher of life, who lived eighteen hundred years ago, who died on the cross the same real death as all people die, and who left us a teaching which gives a meaning and the good to our life.

Let us feed on this teaching, let us try deeper and deeper to penetrate its meaning; let us make farther deductions and applications from it.

No matter what we may say, the word "Christ" remains for us what it is, — a word serving to designate a man to whom a certain teaching is ascribed, and nothing else. Every ascription of another meaning to the word "Christ" only destroys the seriousness and the sincerity of the relation to Christ's teaching and even impairs its meaning.

The meaning of the teaching in its simplest expression is for me as follows: my life, which above all else I conceive as my own, given to me for my enjoyment, does not belong to me, but to Him who has given me the life and who has sent me into this world for the fulfilment of His will. My life belongs to the Father, as Christ calls Him who gives the life to us and to the whole world.

And so the meaning of my life does not lie in my personal good, but in the fulfilment of the will of Him who sent me, His will consisting in increasing love in myself and in other men.

In this does my life and my good and the life and the good of all men consist.

My life is not mine, but His; from Him has it come, and to Him does it go.

In this does the meaning of the teaching consist.

I know who I am, what I have to do, and what will become of me. What more do I need? I will rely on the Father, I will try to do what is imposed upon me. In this do my life and my good consist.

Such, in its simplest expression, is the meaning of Christ's teaching, as I understand it.

Why, then, should I drag the living Christ, who has risen from the dead, into this teaching?

Of what use is he to me?

You say, — and many say this, — that it is impossible to rely on one's own efforts, that it is impossible to rely on oneself.

Pardon me, but this is only words, which have no meaning whatsoever for me, nor for you, either. That a man must not rely upon himself may be said by a materialist, who imagines man as a concatenation of mechanical forces, which are subject to laws that govern matter; but for you and me, as for any religious man, there is a living force, a divine spark, which is implanted in the body and lives in it. God has sent this particle of Himself into my body, hoping that it would do His work. How, then, can I help relying upon Him?

God relies upon me, so how can I help relying upon Him?

Man's life is his activity, — a man may save or ruin his soul.

Christ's whole teaching is nothing but a teaching as to what a man must do; he must not mutter, "Lord, Lord!" but do his commandments, be perfect as the Father is perfect, be merciful, be meek, be self-sacrificing.

Who will do all this, if man himself will not? But to do this, a man must hope to be able to do it.

If by the words, "not to rely upon oneself," is meant that a man should not be sure that he will do everything

he wishes to do, that he will attain the perfection toward which he is striving; that he should not pride himself on what he has done, but should be like a labourer who has come from the field; if by this we are to understand that everything good which there is in man is only that which is divine, then, in that sense, one should not rely upon oneself.

And of what use can such a strange theory be, which impresses people with the idea that they should not rely upon what actually exists and of the existence of which they may constantly convince themselves through experience: they must not rely on having efforts of their own which help a man to move forward, but must rely on what is not and never was, and of the existence of which no one can be convinced, — on the fantastic help of a fantastic being.

Pardon me, if I, speaking thus, offend you; but I do not wish in such an important matter to keep from saying the whole truth, as I see it.

I write to you with love, but do not wish to conceal what I am thinking.

I am standing with one foot in the grave, and I have no reason to feign.

I feel also like answering the question which naturally arises: "If it is an untruth, whence comes this conception of the resurrection of Christ, of his aid to men, of the resurrection of men, and so forth?"

I think that this is due to the fact that the essence of Christianity consists in the establishment by each separate man of his relation to the infinite, to the beginning of everything, to the beginning of my own life also, to God, to the Father.

Having come to understand life as Christ has taught us to understand it, man, as it were, extends a thread upwards from himself to God, binds himself with Him and, sundering all the collateral threads that united him with men (even as Christ commands), holds only by the divine thread and is guided by it through life.

And so I think that what happens is that some people, having established their relation to God, having united with Him by the thread, at the same time are dissatisfied with what God asks of them, and, having by reflection formed a conception of what the true Christian life ought to be, do not place themselves in the position in which the thread which unites them with God has put them, but in that which they imagine true Christians must take up in the presence of other men.

Such people, who have generally sundered their former side threads, which unite them with men, to maintain themselves in this situation, which does not result from the immediate relation to God, but which they have imagined to themselves, get into new relations with men, take up new collateral threads, which maintain them in their chosen position.

And so it happens that the divine thread weakens more and more, and it appears to men that to continue the life which they have begun on this height, which frequently does not correspond to the inner necessity on which they have grounded their life, the only immediate relation to God is no longer necessary, but that they need, on the one hand, the conception of "faith" as something supernatural, special, which would maintain them in the position chosen by them; but as it is impossible for one man to believe in what does not exist they, on the other hand, need an external union of men, who should try to believe alike in what is not, and should support one another on the chosen path, encouraging one another by condemning people for transgressions against given rules and by approving others for executing them.

Thus do I explain the simultaneous tendency of many people toward mystical conceptions and toward external union.

September, 1892.

II.

GOD'S WORK

1

WHAT do I do when I want to change a bristle into a cobbler's thread?

How do I treat these articles?

With the greatest attention, care, tenderness, almost love.

What does the watchmaker do as he puts together a watch, if he is a master and indeed knows how to make a watch?

All his fingers are busy: some of them hold a wheel; others place an axle in position, and others again move up a peg. All this he does softly, tenderly. He knows that if he rudely sticks one thing into another, and even if he presses a little too hard on one part, forgetting another part, the whole will go to pieces, and that he had better not attend to this matter, if he cannot devote all his forces to it.

I say all this for this purpose:

At first people live not knowing why; they live only for their enjoyment, which takes the place of their question, "What for?" but later there comes a time for every rational being, when it asks "What for?" and receives that answer which Christ gave and which we all know, "To do God's work."

Is it possible God's work is less important, or less complicated, than bristles or a watch?

Is it possible God's work may be done at haphazard, and all come out right?

In a watch one cannot press too hard upon a part needed; but the defenders of the worldly life say, "What is the use of being finical: if a thing does not fit in, bang it with the hammer, and it will go in." It does not matter to them that the rest will all be flattened. They do not see this.

It is impossible to work over a watch without giving it full attention and, so to speak, love for all its parts. Is it possible that one may do God's work in such a way?

It is all very well for a man to do God's work at haphazard (that is, not to live in love with his brothers), if he does not believe fully that his work is God's work. But when he comes to believe that the meaning of his life consists in nothing but coöperating for the union of men he cannot help but abandon himself to Him whose work he is doing; he can no longer without attention, care, or love treat all men with whom he comes in contact, because all men are wheels, pegs, and cogs of God's work.

The difference between such a man and a watchmaker is only this, that the watchmaker knows what will result from all the parts; but a man, in doing God's work, does not know, does not see the external side of the work. A man is rather an apprentice, who hands, cleans, oils, and partly unites the component parts of the watch, which is unknown to him in form, but known in its essence (the good).

I want to say that a man who believes that his life is the fulfilment of God's work ought to labour until he gets seriousness, attention, care in his relations with men, — such caution as will make squeaking, force, breakage impossible, and all will always be soft and loving, not for his own pleasure, but because this is the only condition under which God's work is possible.

When this condition is wanting, one or the other is

necessary, — to attain this condition, or to throw up God's work and stop deceiving oneself and others.

As the watchmaker stops his work the moment there is some grating or squeaking, so also must a believer stop as soon as there is an inimical relation to a man, and he must know that, no matter how little important this man may seem to him, there is nothing more important for him than his relation to this man, so long as there is a squeaking between them.

And this is so, because a man is an indispensable wheel in God's work, and so long as he does not enter amicably where he ought to enter the whole work comes to a stop.

The relations among men make it obligatory upon them to find in each of them and in themselves "the son of man," to unite with him, — to evoke in themselves and in him a desire to approach him, that is, love.

I shall be told, "this is hard to find."

All you have to do is to act like the watchmaker: tenderly, carefully, not for yourself, but for the work, and it will come to you naturally.

A disunion takes place for no other reason than that I want by force to drive an axle into the wrong wheel.

If it does not fit one way or another, mend yourself: there is a place for it, — it is necessary and will do the work somewhere.

As you attain your aim and get the better of the work in making boots or watches, not by a tension of strength, but by care, by tenderness of treatment, so it is also with the treatment of men. And not only is it so, but as many times more so, as a man is more complex and more delicate than a watch.

It is not possible to work one's feelers out sufficiently well to treat people with them. And the longer and so the thinner these feelers are, the more powerfully do they move people.

I wish that a man who is near to me should not lead an idle and luxurious life.

I can, with my rudeness, take away from him the possibility of luxury and compel him to work. If I do so, I shall not advance God's work one hair's breadth, — I shall not move the man's soul.

If I extend my feelers more finely and farther out, I shall prove logically and incontestably to him that he is a dissipated and despised man. And with this I shall not advance God's work, but shall only live with him in communion, seeking out and strengthening everything which unites us, and keeping away from everything which is foreign to me. And if I myself do God's work and live by it, I shall more certainly than death draw this man to God and cause him to do God's work.

We have become so accustomed in the worldly life to attain our aims by means of the stick of power, of authority, or even by means of the stick of logical thought, that we want to do the same in God's work.

But one stick jumps upon another.

But God's work is done with very delicate feelers, for which there are no obstacles.

2

Went to see a sick beggar. Terrible poverty.

It is remarkable how we have worked out in ourselves methods of cruelty. What I ought really to have done would have been to have remained there and not have gone away, until he was made equal with me.

3

The highest happiness is to give oneself to others.

And this is confirmed in work — enduringly and in the act — with concentration.

Yes, this is so, but for this the work must be in correspondence with the need; but if the need is higher than the work, this need will be exaggerated, as indeed it is.

Consequently everything is again in the work.

Our main misfortune is in our needing more than we work, and so we become entangled in life.

To work more than we need cannot be harmful, — it is the highest law.

4

As the fire destroys the candle, so the good destroys the personal life.

As the wax melts before the face of fire, so the consciousness of the personal life is destroyed by participation in the good.

You do good only when you renounce yourself.

The scarecrow of death stands only before those who do not know the good.

Death destroys the body, as the scaffolding is destroyed after the building is up and finished. And he whose building is up rejoices at the destruction of the scaffolding and of the body.

Life is for God the erection of His building, — the joy of salvation.

For God there takes place the work of the illumination of the world through man's intellect. For man there is the joy of life which ascends higher and higher.

5

The world lives. In the world there is life.

Life is a mystery for all men.

Some call it God, others say, "Force."

All the same, — it is a mystery.

Life is diffused through everything. Everything lives

together, and everything lives apart: man lives, a worm lives.

This separate life science calls an organism. This stupid word is obscure.

What they call an organism is the force of life, individualized in time and space, which irrationally puts forth the demand of the common life for its individuality.

This individualization of life bears a contradiction in itself. It excludes everything else. Everything else excludes it. By its tendencies toward life it destroys itself.

Every step, every act of life is a dying.

This contradiction would be insoluble, if there were no intellect in the world. But the intellect is in man. It is this which destroys the contradiction.

One man would eat up another, if he had no intellect, which shows him that for his good it is better to be in love with this man and together with him to kill animals for food. The same intellect shows him that it is better for him not to kill animals, but to be in a state of love with them and to live on their products. The same intellect will further point in this direction and will destroy the contradiction of the egoism.

Out of the enormous world of beings that devour one another, man alone is endowed with reason (love also), which is to destroy all this contradiction of egoism.

One would think this is so little for so great a matter.

It is the same as though one should say, "How small one spark is, to burn up a whole forest."

If the fire spark is a burning material, it is sufficient, no matter how small it may be. All that is needed is the burning material: it need only exist, and must not be destroyed.

So also the world of the contradictory egoism of the beings, to keep them from destroying another, is endowed with one of the egoistical tendencies, — flowering, fructi-

fication, and in man — the lust of the sexual act. And the world lives, presenting an imperishable material of the activity of reason — love, for the activity which destroys the egoism of the beings.

The world can wait: the material is not destroyed, — it will always exist, — and there is a spark of fire.

God, or Nature, gives what is indispensable, but only what is indispensable for his aims. Nature, or God, always acts alike. He, or it, never does what is finished, but gives the possibility of completing, — not a tree, but a seed.

For God, for Nature, there is no time.

When there is a possibility for something, there is what ought to be.

The same is true with the realization of the destruction of the contradiction of the egoism of the beings by means of the activity of reason. There is the possibility, and so there is the realization, there is this, as the prophet says, that the lion will lie with the lamb. We may further say that not one animal will crush an insect or a plant.

For a man who has not come to recognize his rational nature there is a full satisfaction in the life of the egoistical contradiction. He then does not see it. He follows the lower law of God, or of Nature; but the moment he has come to recognize his rational nature, the contradiction of his inner life poisons him. He cannot live by it, and he surrenders himself to another law of reason, — to love; now the aim of love is the destruction of the contradiction. Having abandoned himself to this new law, he receives his full satisfaction.

For the rational being there is no other activity, no other life, but the one which has the destruction of the contradiction for its aim. This activity will bring him out of his personality and will cause him to renounce himself; it will take him into the common life, into the service of that God, or of that Nature, for which there is no time.

Man's problem in this life is to renounce everything which is in itself contradictory, that is, personal, egoistical, in order to be able to serve reason, to destroy the inner contradiction of life, in which alone he finds satisfaction, security, fearlessness, and peace before death. If he does not fulfil this problem, he remains in the inner contradiction of the personal life and destroys himself, just as any contradiction destroys itself.

We talk of the future life, of immortality.

What is immortal is only what is not I.

Reason. Love. God. Nature.

June, 1886.

6

It is necessary that we should have strength to do God's work.

It is necessary that there should be a tree with flowers and seeds for the attainment of those infinite purposes which it attains, — shade, and food for insects, and food for plants, and the continuation of its species.

Well, does God do all these things with His own force?

Should Nature break up into an infinite quantity of forces for the attainment of all its ends?

No. In the tree is implanted, or in the tree there is a force of life, and it is this which creates everything; creating itself, it attains all its ends. A separate, personal force of life is given it for the attainment of all its ends.

Only (how can I express this more clearly?) the deception of its personal life incites the tree to serve the world. Intending to live for itself, the tree works, grows, fructifies, serves the world, and (so it appears to us) does not know it.

The same is true of all lives, — animals, men.

I do not know how it is with the others, but I, a man, and some other people who live with me and have lived before me, recognize this deception.

Man seems to be endowed with the ability which reveals the deception to him. It is as though God, or Nature, made him a participant in the secret and permitted him to take a glance into the mechanism of the work.

Man has taken a glance into it, — how can he help it?

How is he to make peace with his situation?

His whole life and his striving toward life is a deception. With all his strivings he is nothing but an instrument for the attainment of ends that are foreign to him.

A commander sends an army of soldiers where they will certainly be killed, but he does not tell them so. If they knew for sure, they would not go. The commander says that there is a risk, but that a great reward, a great joy awaits them. They believe him, and they go. But in the life of men the situation is much worse. It says clearly to all of them (thinking men) that they will inevitably die in great suffering, and that they are only instruments for ends that are foreign to them, and they are unable to believe in all the rewards, which have been promised them only by feeble-minded men, on account of the hopelessness of their condition.

Is the condition of men really so terrible?

It is, for the very reason that they are given an intellect which points out the destination of their personal life in the world; it is terrible for the very reason that they are admitted to the mysteries of God, or of Nature.

Reason lifts for us a part of the curtain. We have seen and we see that we do not live for ourselves. That reason which is admitted to the mysteries of God, or of Nature, which is inseparably connected with that personal life that lives only by that personal life and does not understand a life which is not for itself, is terrified at this life as at something foreign to it.

My reason, which is admitted to God's mysteries, is I.

And I am my personal life. And both these egos are united into one.

I know that I am living for myself, and I want to eat.

Reason says, and it cannot help saying, because it sees this in everything living: "I do not live for myself."

The personal life says: "But I want to live for myself."

Reason does not contradict the personal life, but answers to its demand for a personal happiness: "Everything lives and seeks the personal good not for itself."

But reason cannot help but see that the personal life of a tree, of an animal, and so my own life, wants to eat, and will be only tools, means for the attainment of the greatest ends with the least effort (as Nature always does), means for the common life, the one reason strives after.

7

When the connection between this life and the other is established, everything becomes easy and joyous.

8

At a certain stage of the spiritual development man must refrain from intensifying in himself the feeling of personal compassion for another being. This feeling is in itself of an animal nature, and in a sensitive man it always manifests itself in sufficient strength without artificial incitement.

What one ought to encourage in oneself is spiritual compassion. The soul of a beloved man must always be dearer to me than the body. I must remember that it is better that a beloved man should now, in my presence, die for having declined to kill even a mad dog, than that he should die after many years from eating too much, and should outlive me.

9

There is no force in books. The chief force is in the Christian life according to the teaching of truth.

Glorifications, interpretations, prayers, mysteries, discussions, definitions, divine services, — there has been enough of all that and at all times and in all forms, and people's teeth are set on edge by it. Now another problem begs for recognition in the Christian world, — the problem of the realization in life of the Christian world-conception; questions of ownership, of war, of punishment, of power, of prostitution are now the questions of the day. For the last twenty years it has been noticed how humanity, burying itself in these questions, has been endeavouring to answer them.

This solution, it seems to me, now begins to be given.

Men, as it were, are beginning to make attempts at applying to life what they confess.

It is these separate phenomena which interest me, and to them I intended to devote what very small particle of life seems to be left to me.

10

I am not afraid of a candle that is not burning, but of one that is, and not because its fire is not the real one, but because it is the property of fire to flame up and go out.

11

Remember how often Christ has said, "The Father has sent me. I am sent. I do the will of Him who has sent me."

These words have always been obscure to me.

God could not have sent God, and I did not understand any other meaning, or understood it obscurely.

Only now has the simple, clear, and joyous meaning of

these words been revealed to me. I arrived at the comprehension of them through doubt and suffering. Without this teaching there is no solution to those doubts which torment every disciple of Christ.

Their meaning is this, that Christ has taught all men the life which he considered the true one for himself. But he considers his life an embassy, a fulfilment of the will of Him who sent him.

But the will of Him who sent is the rational (good) life of the whole world. Consequently, it is the business of life to carry the truth into the world.

Life has, according to Christ's teaching, been given to man with his reason for no other purpose than that he should carry this reason into the world, and so man's whole life is nothing but this rational activity turned upon other beings in general, and not merely upon men.

Thus Christ understood his life, and thus he taught us to understand ours.

Each of us is a power which is conscious of itself, — a flying stone which knows whither it flies and why, and is glad because it flies and knows that it is nothing, — a stone, — and that all its meaning is in this flight, this force which has thrown him, — that his whole life is this force.

Indeed, outside this view, that is, that every man is a messenger of the Father, called into life only for the purpose of doing His will, — outside this view life has not only no meaning, but is also detestable and terrible. And, on the contrary, it is enough to become well familiarized and one with this view of life, and life not only acquires a meaning, but also becomes joyous and significant. Only with this view are all doubts, struggles, and terrors destroyed.

If I am God's messenger, my chief business does not only consist in fulfilling the five commandments, — they are only conditions under which I must fulfil the ambas-

sadorship, — but in living in such a way as to carry into the world with all means given me that truth which I know, that truth which is entrusted to me.

It may happen that I shall myself often be bad, that I shall be false to my mission; all this cannot for a moment destroy the meaning of my life: "To shine with that light which is in me, so long as I am able, so long as there is light in me."

Only with this teaching are destroyed the idle regrets as to there not being or having been what I wished, and the idle desire for something definite in the future; there is destroyed the terror of death, and the whole of life is transferred into the one present. Death is destroyed by this, that, if my life has blended with the activity of introducing reason and the good into the world, the time will come when the physical annihilation of my personality will coöperate with what has become my life, — the introduction of the good and of reason into the world.

The conviction of the ambassadorship has the following practical effect upon me (I speak for myself and, I know, for others also):

Outside the physical necessities, in which I try to confine myself to the least, as soon as I am drawn to some activity, — speaking, writing, working, — I ask myself (I do not even ask, I feel it) whether with this work I serve Him who sent me. I joyously surrender myself to the work and forget all doubts and — fly, like a stone, and am glad that I am flying.

But if the work is not for Him who has sent me, it does not even attract me, I simply feel ennui, and I only try to get rid of it, I try to observe all the rules given for messengers.

But this does not even happen.

It seems to me that a man can live in such a way as to sleep, or in such a way as with his whole soul, with delight, to serve Him who has sent him.

12

Christ has conquered the world and has saved it, because he has suffered with love and joy, that is, has conquered suffering and has taught us to do the same.

I know this, but am still unable to learn it, although I see for sure that I am moving in this direction.

May God help all men to do the common work, the work of love, by word, deed, abstinence, effort: here, not to speak a bad word, not to do what would be worse; there, to overcome timidity and false shame, and to do what is necessary, what is good, — what is loving.

All tiny, imperceptible acts and words, — but from these mustard-seeds grows the tree of love which with its branches shades the whole world.

This work may God aid us to do with our friends, with our enemies, with strangers, in moments when our mood is the highest, and in moments when it is the lowest.

And it will be well for us, and it will be well for everybody.

III.

FORM AND EXISTENCE

1

MEN cannot live without establishing for themselves a form of life to conform with the degree of their morality, but every form of life, from that of an English lord to that of an agricultural peasant, is in itself not only carrion, but a hindrance to the true life. From this it does not follow that it is necessary to live without any definite form, without a plan of life (a man cannot do this), but that we must not only refrain from esteeming the plan, but must also fear it like the fire.

The true life is only in the relations between men.

In the worldly life everything is in the form, and the relations among men are completely sacrificed to form.

But even in the most moral life this temptation always accompanies man.

I want to finish the exposition of this thought, and a recruit comes to bid me good-bye.

To finish is the form, the plan; and the recruit is the man and my relations to him, — it is true life. This will not interfere with my ending my writing, if I am alive, and so forth.

I shall look at my life: how many various forms of life I have established for myself!

What is left of them?

Nothing.

And what is left of the past life, — of my relations to men?

For the forty years of my worldly life I established hardly any relations to men, because I lived for the sake of form.

And during the short years when I lived without form, how many dear relations, with which it is a joy to live and to die!

November, 1886.

2

How joyous and how contrary to all human works is this, that on the divine path there is no weariness, nor cooling off, nor, much more, any return.

I see this in the case of all those few men whom I know and who have entered upon this path.

It is frequently hard and agonizing, in a worldly sense, and the farther on the harder and the more agonizing.

There is no hope of a realization of anything in this world, in our lifetime; and never, not only any question as to whether my path will betray me, but even any doubt, no wavering, no regrets.

This is that one, true, narrow path.

No matter where and how comfortably and how agreeably I may walk, there can always be a doubt whether I am on the path. There is none on the one, true path. On all other paths there are diversity and disputes; but on this one there is complete unity, not only with those who think and speak alike, but also with all those who understand it, each in his own way.

The Pashkovians, Orthodox, Catholics, condemn me; they, the Christians, frequently, contrary to Christ's teaching, cause me pain, but I not only do not condemn them (I am not speaking for argument's sake, but sincerely, for I cannot feel otherwise), but even hail them on the true path, every time when they stand upon it, rejoice at their

successes and am unable to express my feelings for them, so much do I love them.

Lately I read a newspaper, *L'Armée du Salut.*

The form of expression is strange and incomprehensible to me, but their activity, which leads to abstinence, to love, to paying attention to Christ's teaching, incites love for them and joy in me.

Lately, as I read the articles in the *Salvation Army*, I explained to myself their activity and spiritual condition, and my relation to them.

They take people who have departed from Christ back to him. It is nice of them to do so, and nothing more can be expected of them.

He who has come to the spring of living water and who has thirst will himself find what to do with the water and how to drink it. Their mistake consists in this, that they insist upon the form, upon the necessity of drinking the water in this way, and not in that, and in such and such a situation. And this mistake harms them the more since they have never thought of the methods of drinking the water, and take the long-worn tradition, which has proved inconvenient in practice.

My relation to them is awfully strange. By searchings, sufferings, and, of course, above all else, by God's mercy, I was led to the spring. I had been dying and I began to live, and I live by this water alone; suddenly men come to this spring. I hail them with enthusiasm and love, and instead, not of love, but of simple absence of malice, which I had hoped to find, I find condemnation and rejection, and the injunction that, before drinking, I must pass through the psychological processes, which are not proper for me, but through which they have passed, — renounce the consciousness of life and of happiness, which the living water gives me, and recognize the fact that I am doing it only out of fear of the pastors who have called me to the drinking.

I do not say that they, or any one else, ought to travel on the same path with me.

The point is not how I arrived, but what I arrived at.

If we have come to Christ and want to live by him alone, we will not quarrel.

3

The question of prayer and of aid according to prayer.

This question has of late interested me.

I now feel every day the necessity of praying, of asking God's aid.

This necessity is natural (at least to those of us who have been accustomed to it from childhood), and I think it is natural to all men.

To feel one's weakness and to seek outside aid, that is, not merely through a struggle with evil, but to try to find methods by which it would be possible to vanquish evil, this is called praying.

To pray does not mean to employ methods which deliver one from evil, but among the methods which deliver there is also the action which is called prayer.

The peculiarity of prayer, as compared with all other methods, consists in this, that it is agreeable to God.

If this is true, then, in the first place, the question arises why prayer, that is, an action which is pleasing to God and saves me from evil, must be expressed in words only, or in obeisances, which do not last long, as is generally assumed. Why can prayer not be expressed by continuous motions of the body, say of the feet only,— the wandering of the pilgrim is a prayer of the feet,— and if I go and work a whole day or a whole week for a poor widow, will this be prayer?

I think it will.

In the second place, prayer is a request for the realization of some external or internal desire. For example, I ask that my children may not die, or that I may be freed

from vice, my weakness. Why shall I turn to the incomprehensible and great God with such prayers which can be fulfilled by His manifestations upon earth, — by men, who are united in the fulfilment of His will (the church in the true meaning of this word)?

Everything for which I have prayed may be fulfilled by men and by me. I feel like praying, and I pray with words. But is it not better for me to widen the concept of prayer? Is it not better for me to try to find the causes of this vice and to find that divine activity, not of an hour, but of days and months, which may be that saving activity that counteracts my vice?

And I found it for myself.

I am sensuous, and I lead an idle, voluptuous life, and I pray. Would it not be better for me to change my godless life, to work for others, to satisfy my body less, — to get married, if I am not? It will turn out that my whole life is a prayer, and this prayer will certainly be fulfilled.

But more than this: the very necessity of prayer — of a supplication of direct aid from a living being — is satisfied in the simplest, non-supernatural manner. I am weak and bad, and I know what I suffer from.

I reveal my weakness to another and ask Him to help me, and He, at times by His mere presence, serves as an impediment to the development of this vice.

I do so.

Prayer directed to God, I shall be told, can that be bad?

Of course not. I not only do not regard it as bad, but myself from old habit pray, though I do not consider this important. What is important is what God wants from you and what God has given you tools for. And so if I had the means for saving myself by means of certain acts, or by means of other men, and I did none of these things, and only prayed to God, I should feel that I did wrong.

One more thing about prayer, and the main thing.

Remember what Jesus said to the Samaritan, "Men must worship God in spirit and in truth." The true translation for "in truth" is "by deeds."

This is one of those texts which, as Arnold says, ought to stand in the first place.

4

I stood in the forest.

I began to tell my fortune as I tore off the petals of a flower: "Immense, great, medium, half-and-half, small, very small, insignificant."

Twice it turned out, "Very small."

I have outlived this habit of telling fortunes, but this "very small" interested me.

This is certainly the best I can wish.

The greatest is always very small.

For God every act is very small. And it is the right act.

One only needs to do good around oneself, — to give joy to men around oneself, — without any aim, — and this is a great aim.

5

I have thought on the gradualness of the demands of Nature, — of food and labour, of the collecting of the seed and its return, and, as it seems to me, of the collecting of knowledge and its transmission.

But love does not enter into this series, because love is life itself, which is attained through the natural gratification of these demands.

6

I read Medor's work on civilization. He divides it beautifully into four parts: (1) the material, (2) the physical, (3) the mental, and (4) the moral.

But civilization is the substitution of mental factors for physical ones, and of moral factors for mental ones.

This is confused, but it is the truth.

Civilization is a word, and it is quite unnecessary to define it. The truth is, that the greatest good of men is invariably attained by the application to life of those factors by which the good is acquired in the best manner possible.

As it is stupid to lift up with the hand what may be raised with a lever, so it is stupid to maintain one's relations and defend one's independence by means of war, when this very end is attained by means of a moral life.

7

We reproach God, we feel sorrow, because we meet obstacles in the realization of Christ's teaching.

Well, how would it be if all of us were without domestic disagreements?

"We should come together and live happily and joyously."

Well, and others?

"Others would not even know."

We want to collect the fire in one small heap, so that it may burn more easily. But God has scattered the fire in the wood.

They are busy, but we are worrying, because they are not burning.

8

None of us is called to destroy all the sufferings of men, but only to serve men.

People always ask, "What is evil for?"

What is evil?

What we call evil is a challenge addressed to us, a demand made upon our active love. The man who will reply to these demands of the activity of love will see

precisely as much evil as he needs in order to provoke his activity.

Thus I think and feel now, but only lately I saw very much evil, and I was vexed and in despair, and so I prescribe the recipe which has helped me.

The moment you see an evil, even the smallest, try to mend it, to diminish it, and you will never see much evil at once and will not arrive at despair, and the hands will not drop, and you will do much good.

January, 1887.

9

The chief error of men is this, that it seems to each in particular that the guide of his life is a striving after enjoyment and an aversion to suffering. And a man, all alone, without any guidance, surely renders himself to this guide: he seeks enjoyment and avoids suffering, and in this does he place the aim and meaning of life.

But a man can never live in enjoyment, and cannot avoid suffering. Consequently the purpose of life does not lie in this.

If it did lie in this, — what insipidity!

The purpose is enjoyments, and they do not exist and cannot exist.

And if they did exist, the end of life is death, which is always conjugate with suffering.

If sailors decided that their aim is to avoid the rise of the waves, whither would they sail?

The end of life is outside enjoyments. It is attained by passing through them.

This transition from enjoyments to sufferings is the respiration of life, inspiration and expiration, the taking of food and the giving it back.

To set as one's aim the enjoyments and to avoid suffering means to lose the path which cuts through them.

August, 1887.

10

Where, then, and of what character, is the law under which we live?

Do not say that it is the law of this, that your body should fare well, — eat, drink, cohabit, watch its own children. This is not a law, but the demands of the flesh, the very demands for which a law is needed.

Cattle have no law — they have all the same lusts.

They all want the same.

To avoid this, that men, wishing to eat the same, to sleep with the same woman, should kill one another off, and so should none of them have enough, to eat and sleep they must divide up, must establish a law. And to divide up, lust must be limited. So the law is born among men as to how to limit lust.

As many lusts as there are, so many laws are there.

For a law is nothing but a vanquishing, a subjugation of lust for the sake of another man. And there are many such laws in the heart of every man.

Cattle have no law, and have no need of it.

Well or ill, man cannot live without law: the law is written within him, and there has never been a man without law.

When there was but the one Adam (it makes no difference whether he existed or not), and there was but one man on earth, he could have lived without any law. He alone had lusts, and they did not interfere with any one, but as soon as there were two or three men, the lusts came into conflict:

"I want to eat this apple!"

"And so do I!"

One man killed another with a stone; a third man appears, and he will not let the matter rest. His soul will tell him whether the man who killed the brother did well or ill.

Having found the law in your heart, do not say that there is no law. The law is written in your heart.

If you lived but one day with men and performed deeds, and looked at their deeds, you would find the law. And even now there is not a human deed on which you have not a judgment in your soul according to your law, and there is not any deed of yours for which you do not know a law.

If you say, "There is no law," you merely say that there are now so many laws, and that they are so senseless that it is impossible to make them out. And there are laws, and many of them at that, one of which commands what the other forbids. There are, besides, statutes which do not vanquish the lusts, but determine how the lusts are to be gratified, and these statutes are also called laws, so that men live in this world of laws and statutes at haphazard, without following any law, mixing up the statutes with the laws and living exclusively according to the commands of the lusts.

Whether you live according to the law or according to the lusts, do not forget that there is a law; and not one law, but an infinitude of laws, and we follow thousands of them, and without them a man has never lived and could never live. But there have come to be so many laws, and we have become so entangled in them, that we can live according to the lust, selecting such laws as are convenient to us, and substituting other laws for such as are not convenient for us.

Laws cannot help but exist.

Let two men live together two days, and they will have laws, and millions of millions have lived five thousand years together, and should they have found no laws?

All this is foolish, and there is no sense in talking about it.

I now live in my house, the children study and play, my wife works, I write. All this is done only because

there are laws, which are recognized by all men. No stranger comes to live in my house, because it is mine, and according to the tenth commandment no one should wish for what belongs to another.

The children study what I command them to study, — according to the fourth commandment.

My wife is free from temptations, according to the seventh.

I work as much as I can, according to the fourth.

I have quoted the commandments of Moses from old habit, but I could mention thousands of laws of the civil and of the common law which half confirm the same.

But, if I want, I can at once find even such laws and customs as abrogate these.

I will say, "Why have you a house? Christ, who showed us an example of life, did not have a place to lean his head against. Why have you a house, when there are poor people without a home? Why have you a house, since it says that you should have no care?"

I will say, "Why care for the children? Not one hair will fall from their heads without the will of the heavenly Father. What sense is there in teaching them, since those who are poor in spirit are blessed?"

I will simply say, "Why teach them pagan wisdom, since you are a Christian?"

I will say, "Why teach for ambition's sake, if it is better to work the earth? Why have you a wife, when it is better not to get married? Why have you a wife, when it says, 'He that shall not forsake his wife is not worthy of me'?"

"Why do you work, why write? This is contrary to humility, and contrary to refraining from worldly cares."

Thus, if I left my house, wife, children, work, I should also be doing according to the divine law and should be finding for my confirmation and justification civil and common laws. It is possible to leave wife and children,

and to go to a monastery. It is possible to leave wife and children, to get a divorce, to marry another, and to commit debauchery, — and for everything to find a confirmation in divine and civil laws, — thus, do whatever you please, — and for everything a law will be found.

It is in this condition that we are, and that is not good.

Not that there is no law, but that there are now too many of them, and that men have become too painfully clever.

11

Man is flesh, has life and reason, and develops.

It is all very well to say that a rope develops, a germ develops in the egg, but it is unscrupulous to apply this word to a man.

If you are a man, you live.

And so do not go on talking of development, but simply look at yourself and say what you are doing, having life and reason.

If you do so, you will answer that you are looking for rational choice among all the demands of your flesh.

In this alone does all our life consist.

12

(From Lao-Tse)

When a man is born, he is frail and weak; when he is strong and powerful, he dies.

When a tree is born, it is frail and tender; when it is dry and brittle, it dies.

Strength and power are the accompaniments of death.

Frailty and weakness are the accompaniments of life, because what is strong does not conquer.

When a tree has become strong, it is cut down.
What is strong and great, is insignificant.
What is frail and weak, is great.

13

A Jewish emigrant came.

He wants to find what there is in common between Jews and Russians, which would unite them.

This has long ago been found.

At times I feel sorry because the wood does not burn. As though, if it burned in my presence, at once, this would not serve as a clear proof, a clear sign, of this, that it is not the wood that is burning, but the kindling; but the wood has not yet caught fire.

14

Where people are angry, there it is not good.

A child recognizes this instinctively and goes away from such a place. A child does not become angry itself, does not become vexed at the manifestation of anger in others, and its joys and occupations in life are not impaired by it.

15

I have read Confucius and have made notes.

The Chinese religio-rational explanation of power and the teaching about it has been a revelation to me.

Things that were obscure are getting clearer and clearer to me.

True power cannot be based on violence, nor on tradition. It can be based only on the unity of the recognition of this height by all men.

Power will be no violence only when it is recognized as morally and rationally the *highest.*

Power, as violence, arises when we recognize as highest what is not the highest according to the demands of our heart and reason.

The moment a man (be he a father or a king, or be it a legislative assembly) submits to what he does not fully respect, there appears violence.

When what I consider the highest has become not the highest, and I condemn it, I generally have recourse to two methods:

(1) I myself stand higher than what was the highest, — I subject it to myself (the quarrels of sons and fathers, revolutions).

(2) In spite of the fact that the highest has ceased to be the highest, I purposely continue to consider it the highest (Confucianism, Slavophilism).

Both means are terrible, and the most terrible of the two is the latter, because it leads up to the first.

There is one way out:

I do not consider this or that high, and so must not act in such a way.

I consider this or that the highest, and so I must act in such a way.

16

A man who does something bad is not evil, but frequently is even good: kings, soldiers.

But a man who does something bad and knows that it is bad, a doubting man, — he is bad indeed.

These are the only bad ones in the world.

17

The ministration to others begins with the ministration to oneself.

If we are to believe that man's aim and duty consists in serving his neighbour, we must also arrive at this, how

we should serve our neighbour, — we must work out the rules how we are to serve in our position.

For us in our position to serve, we must first of all stop demanding other people's service.

It seems strange, but the first thing we have to do, before anything else, is to serve ourselves, that is, to make our own fires, fetch our own water, cook our own dinners, and wash our own dishes and dirty linen —

In this way shall we begin the ministration to others.

18

All acts performed by a man may be divided into three categories.

One series of these consists of those which we perform without asking ourselves about them whether they are good or bad; we do them without noticing them.

Other acts are such as we, speaking with St. Paul, consider bad, but none the less perform; acts which we wish to perform, but do not always perform, or do not wish to perform, and yet perform them.

A third class of acts consists of such as we wish to perform and always perform, or do not wish to perform and never perform.

The acts of the first series are those which have not yet fallen under the judgment of our conscience, but of which, in measure as our life advances, a greater and ever greater number fall under our judgment and pass over to the second series.

The acts of the third series are such as have passed the judgment of our conscience and, dividing up into good and bad, into desirable and undesirable, have become the possession of our moral natures, — they are our interest of life, our only wealth, which is acquired by life. It it this, that before this I could fight, get drunk, fornicate,

and so forth, and now not merely do not wish, but am unable to do so.

Thus the first series is the material for life's working over. The third series is what has already been prepared by life, what is lying in the storeroom. The second series is what is now on the work-table, what is being worked at.

And how remarkably happy and joyous is the condition of men! Whether men want it or not, this third series is being worked out in life: a man grows manly, and he grows wiser in intellect and experience; he grows older, the passions weaken, and the work of life is done.

But if the whole meaning, the whole aim of life is put into this work, we get constant joy, constant success.

Now, it is always possible to understand this and to recognize what acts belong to this or to that series, and to strain every attention toward the second series.

19

It is accepted to regard vexation at injustice, anger provoked by evil, as not only a noble and praiseworthy, but even a useful and necessary feeling, as a stimulus for a struggle with evil. But this is a great mistake.

Anger is not at all necessary.

Any one may practically convince himself of this from the fact that anger immediately disappears the moment a man undertakes to mend the results of the evil.

When a man is a witness to some injustice or cruelty, for example to a fight, in which the weak are worsted by the strong, he in his soul experiences anger against the offenders. He need but undertake to mend the consequences of the evil, he need but busy himself with the aim of diminishing the sufferings of the victims of the fight, he need but begin to tend to the wounds of the maimed, — and immediately the feeling of anger is allayed and

gives way to a feeling of inner satisfaction and joy, which always accompany every ministration to a neighbour. Thus it is always.

An angry incitement against evil is a sign that a man does not yet counteract evil with deeds, does not yet mend the results of the evil, though it may easily happen with this that he is struggling against evil in the most energetic manner possible.

20

In consequence of the comprehension of the spirit of Christianity, men are generally divided into Christians and non-Christians.

The grossest division consists in regarding only him who has been baptized as a Christian.

Another division, though less gross, consists in this, that he who on the basis of Christ's teaching lives a pure, domestic life, who is no murderer, etc., is called a Christian, in contradistinction to him who lives differently.

Both these divisions are equally incorrect.

In Christianity there is no line which separates a Christian from a non-Christian. There is light, the ideal, Christ, and there is darkness, the animal. There is a motion in the name of Christ, toward Christ, along a path indicated by his teaching.

And we are all somewhere, walking on this path.

21

We frequently deceive ourselves, thinking, when we meet revolutionists, that we are standing near each other, in the same row.

"There is no country!"

"There is no country."

"There is no ownership!"

"There is no ownership."

"There is no unequality!"

"There is no unequality," and many more things. It seems to be one and the same thing.

But there is a great difference, and there are even no people farther removed from us than they are.

For a Christian there is no country, — for them country has to be destroyed.

For a Christian there is no property, — and they want to annihilate property.

For a Christian all are equal, — and they want to abolish inequality.

This is like the two ends of a snapped ring. The two ends are side by side, — they are not farther removed than all the other parts of the ring.

It is necessary to walk all around the ring, in order to connect what is on the ends.

22

I fully agree with your opinion that many people have needed solitude and fasting, in order to strengthen and try themselves; but I think (no doubt you, too, think so) that this cannot be a rule: some need solitude and fasting before any other trials, others do not need them.

With an equally sincere striving after the good and after truth, the paths over which people travel toward them may be quite different.

It seems to me that one of the chief causes of the disagreement of people is this, that each, walking on his own, familiar path toward truth, and seeing another man walking by another path toward the same goal (and there are as many paths as there are radii), is inclined to insist that the true path is only the one he is travelling upon.

In general the article on the fasters was interesting to me, because of late I have had occasion to read and think much about gluttony, and I think that one of the chief

sins, the most common one and almost the radical one, on which grows up a mass of others, is gluttony and belly-madness, — the desire to eat and drink for a long time and as agreeably as possible.

In the article on fasts there is much which is superstitious and exaggerated, and a superfluous motive of fasting, which consists in the castigation of the body, but the hope through fasting to strengthen one's spiritual power seems untrue to me. But what is important is that a man now generally eats several times more than is necessary for the best manifestation of his forces (by forces I understand the most profitable relation, as far as the human activity is concerned, of his spiritual and his physical forces), and that therefore fasting, the conscious destruction of gluttony, is useful for all men, — that is, the accustoming oneself to the least amount of food, with which the most advantageous correlation is attained.

Now the most advantageous correlation is attained, I think, with the consumption of a much smaller amount of food than is in general considered necessary.

You say that it was most easy for you to vanquish the lust of feeding, but with me it was the very opposite. And I think that the lust of feeding is closely connected with the sexual lust and serves as its foundation.

You will perhaps say, "What shall be regarded as the most advantageous relation between the spiritual and the physical forces? This concept is a relative one." I will not undertake to settle now definitely what this relation should be, but I know it for myself, and I think that everybody knows it. I know in myself the condition which most nearly approaches the one I should like to be in: a great clearness of thought, an ability to transfer myself into the condition of another man, — to understand it, — and physical lightness, a mobility an absence of the consciousness of my body.

Now a certain amount of food removes me from this state, or brings me near to it. When I fast too much, my stomach is felt by me, — there are no clear ideas, no sympathy, though there is mobility. When I eat too much, everything is lost, — clearness of ideas, sympathy, and even mobility. And so I will always find that amount which is necessary, and it will always be less than the food usually taken by the majority of people.

If it shall seem to you that I am uselessly talking of such subjects, I must beg your pardon: I consider this subject, from its practical applications to life, unquestionably most important.

I more or less understand your world conception; I say more or less, because it is impossible completely to express one's view of life. We understand each other's world conception, not because we express it in a common connection, but more in consequence of various incidental expressions of a concordant sympathy in respect to all kinds of questions.

23

I have several times before expressed the idea that union between men can be found only in the union with truth, with God; but the attempts at seeking a union with men, with certain, chosen men, shows either that men are unable, or unwilling, or too tired to seek a union with God, or do not believe in this, that the union with God will give them a union with men; or it weakens the striving after a union with God, and so is undesirable.

Besides, how can I know with whom I am to be in a very close union?

By what signs shall I find out that I am to be in a union with John, and not with Peter, or with the monk Anthony, or with the Governor of Chernígov, or with the Krapívensk horse-thief?

The very project of an external union such as you pro-

pose is in reality a project of disunion: we must recognize that in the distance between Khárkov and Túla there are but two or three men who can understand us, and this is a sin, and an untruth, and it is unnecessary.

What unites us, and can unite us more, is a greater approximation to the perfection of the Father, which we are told to seek, and I am convinced that you, like me, and like all people, have experienced those transitions of moods of love, to which we all are near, and the union has taken place easily and joyfully from without. But the external union such as you propose will, in all probability, only disunite those who in this manner will attempt to unite. A union can exist only if we throw off everything which disunites, which can give a cause for temptation, as when, defending a fortress, the suburbs are burned, and if we leave only that which is eternal, common to all, and first of all necessary for us, and what this is, we all know.

And the more sincerely we shall live for the fulfilment of this, the more eternally shall we be in union, not only with a certain dozen of men, but with all the men of the world.

If we do not support one another, either materially, or spiritually; if we err; if we go away from one another and, above all, if we have no common aim, we cannot mend this by an artificial joining and by words said to one another. Union is possible only in truth, and in order to attain truth we must do one thing,—seek it with a constant, unceasing effort, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," and another thing: be meek, reject pride, self-love, your own opinion, and, above all else, reject all kinds of considerations, such as, for example, "If I believe thus, I shall be with the government, or with the people, or with the holy fathers, or with the church; if I believe thus, I can be justified before people and myself," or, that it is a pleasure to believe thus. All

this has to be rejected, and you have to be prepared in advance for this, that the recognition of the truth will be disadvantageous to you, will humble you.

Assembling will not help in the recognition of the truth; the only salvation is in an approach to it, and in this alone is the means for union. But an artificial union can only weaken the striving after truth.

Then again, who is to assemble for the seeking of the union, and who is to be aided materially and spiritually?

Where is that stamp by which we recognize our people?

Is it not a sin to segregate ourselves and others from the rest, and is not this union with dozens a disunion from thousands and millions?

And then again, the union which you seek, the union with God, is accomplished at a depth which frequently is not reached by our vision.

I am convinced that if one should ask an old man on his death-bed, for example, me, with whom I have been in a true, a most real union, I shall hardly name those whom I should name now.

The union with the dead is frequently greater than with the living.

Let us do what leads to union, let us approach God, but let us not think of union. It will be in proportion with our perfection, our love.

You say, "It is easier in company."

What is easier? To plough, mow, drive piles, yes, is easier, but God can be approached only singly.

Only through God, as through the heart, is there a communication between all the parts of the body; but the direct communication, which does not pass through God, is only seeming. You have no doubt experienced this, and I, too, have experienced this.

What may seem strange is this, that with people with whom there exists a real communion through God, we have no reason for speaking, and do not feel like it; but

we feel like speaking and pointing out and making things clear to those with whom we have not as yet any divine communion; with these we try to establish a communion despite the heart, but this cannot be done and is an idle occupation.

You say that it is better together, but it seems to me that this cannot be said, cannot be determined; we must do what God commands: if He brings us together, well and good; if He scatters us in every direction, again well and good. But as to what you say about "the farther steps," I now do not see these farther steps in a renunciation of self (this is in your case and in that of many men already done in consciousness), but in doing precisely the opposite of what you wish to do, not in segregating yourselves, but in welding together; do the opposite, find the greatest means for communing with the whole great world of all men; find a communion in which, without making any compromises, you may commune, love, and be loved.

24

Principles, meaning by this word what ought to guide our whole life, are not to blame for anything, and without principles it is bad to live.

The trouble is this, that frequently that is made a principle which cannot be a principle, as, for example, the principle of a thorough steaming in a bath-house, and so forth. Not even the product of bread labour, as Bondarév says, can be a principle.

We have one common, fundamental principle, — love, not only in word and tongue, but in fact and truth, that is, with a loss, a sacrifice of one's life for the sake of God and one's neighbour.

From this common rule result the particular principles of meekness, humility, non-resistance to evil, as the consequence of which there will be agricultural, industrial,

and even factory work for which there is the least number of competitors and the reward is smallest.

From all the circles where competition is great, a man who keeps Christ's teaching in fact, and not in words, will be pushed out, and he will involuntarily find himself among the labourers. Thus the labour condition of a Christian is the result of the application of a principle, — and not a principle. If people shall take for their basal principle to be labouring men, and shall not fulfil what leads to it, this will obviously lead to confusion.

I am fully agreed with you that to live by principles alone is pernicious, but I do not agree with you that it is possible to live without them, that is, without a mental activity which determines life.

It is just as pernicious to live in faith alone, as to live by one set of principles. One is so much connected with the other, that they are both parts of one whole, — of the moral forward movement.

To say that it is useless or pernicious to make a definition of life and to try to make reality conform with it, is the same as saying that it is useless and pernicious to put one foot forward without transferring to it all the weight of the body. Just as it is impossible to walk without putting a foot forward, and is impossible to walk by jumping on one foot, so it is impossible to move in life, without mentally defining the path, — without establishing principles and conforming life with them.

Both, that is, the principle determined in advance and the inevitable consequence, — faith, — are indispensable for motion. It is even difficult to separate one from the other, to say where one begins and the other ends, just as in walking it is difficult to say on what foot I am resting at a given second, and which foot is moving me.

August, 1892.

IV.

THE OFFENCES OF THE UNDERTAKINGS OF LIFE

1

You have just had time to think, "I have conquered!" and are triumphant, when you are ready to fall into the ditch.

2

The most persistent offence, from which you will never rid yourself and which it is impossible to evade, but which one must know how to direct, is the offence of undertaking life in the future external forms.

Without doing so, it seems, we cannot live.

I begin to write a letter and I assume that I shall end it and shall say this or that. I build a house, etc. It is impossible to get along without doing so! But how shall we do it?

In such a way that we shall never lose sight of the fact that human relations are more precious than the undertaking which we have entered upon.

The writing of a letter or a book, the ploughing of the field, the building of a house, all these are only forms of life; but life itself consists in the complex play of men's relations in these forms.

There may be an error in forms, but life, which may proceed in the most faulty forms, can always be holy, full, and fruitful.

November, 1886.

3

There is one teacher, Christ, and he teaches one thing, the fulfilment of the Father's will, not for the pleasure of men, but in order that we may be with Him, consequently may be happy and free.

The chief obstacle in this is in the malice and praise or the condemnation of men. This obstacle, if you are the least bit careless, takes the place of the seeking of the true good in the fulfilment of God's will.

4

To tempt God means, not to follow His law, His command.

But God's laws and commands are written on paper and are expressed in words. As regards these commands, doubt is possible, and great caution must be observed toward them.

Other commands are written in our hearts.

And we must not believe all these at once. Our hearts may be corrupt and may give their own commands out for God's.

But there are other commands, which are written both in books and in our hearts, and in all our beings, as, for example, food and food-producing labour, love of parents and children, and marital life productive of these conditions.

A man may do anything (he may even shoot himself), but he never can with impunity depart from the law, that is, there can be no doubt but that with this departure he will make himself worse and will not attain what he wanted.

5

Two things became clear to me yesterday, — one — of no importance, the other — of importance.

The first is of no importance.

I was afraid to say and think that all men — ninety-nine hundredths of them — are insane.

There is not only no reason for being afraid, but we cannot help but say and think so, if people act madly. If people lead a senseless city life, senselessly educate their children, abandon themselves to senseless luxury and idleness, they will certainly also talk senselessly.

The second is of importance.

If indeed I see (partially) by God's will, the senseless, sick world cannot approve of me for it.

If the world did approve of me, I should be ceasing to live according to God's will, but should be living according to the world's will.

I should be ceasing to see and seek God's will.

Such was Thy will.

6

The struggle with evil by means of violence is the same as an attempt to stop a cloud, in order that there may be no rain.

7

The main Christian teaching, the teaching of the truth, has in its application passed through all the stages of consciousness, of verbal expression, and of the excitation of the religious sentiment; all this has been done and worked over, and there is nothing new to be said or done here.

But the consciousness of truth only begins to demand a true vital application, and here the teaching, or the disciples of this teaching, like a mettled horse with a wagon near a hill, perform all kinds of tricks: they toss to the right and to the left, start back, rear on their hind legs; but there is one thing they will not do, and that is, — they do not wish to put their necks into the collar and pull up-hill.

There is but one thing which they do not do, the one necessary thing, — they do not wish to fulfil the teaching, in spite of the tension of the work. And so it is impossible to make sufficient efforts and sacrifices, in order from Christian conversations and sentiments to pass to acts, from balking at the foot of the hill to walking in even step up-hill.

To pass from talking to acting, we may sacrifice anything but what we are pulling by, the traces, that is, the good-will to men, the love union with men.

8

The other day a young lady called on me, and she asked me how she might live well.

So I said to her, "Live as you deem good. For, if I tell you, you will live according to my conscience, and this is inconvenient. Every person must live by his own conscience, and not higher than his conscience, but a little lower. The best is to live in such a way as to fall a little below the conscience, so that one may be able to catch up with the conscience, when it gets too far ahead. This is best, for then a man is always dissatisfied with himself, does not always fully answer the demands of his conscience, repents, goes ahead, 'lives.'

"It is bad to live too far below one's conscience, — it is hard to catch up with it, for what may happen to a man is what happened to Peter before the threefold crowing of the cock.

"Worst of all is renunciation, when a man has caught up with his conscience and stops, for rest is death."

9

It is impossible from Spencer to deduce Christianity, that is, truth.

Truth is from God, through Christ, and there is no other path for it.

If we were to deduce anything from Spencer, we should get what we did get: there will be found the alphabet of Christianity, and not of Christianity alone, but the alphabet of all religions, — the love of God and of our neighbour, which was given long ago, and has always been known to all men.

And it seems to us that we know everything; and we even feel angry because Christ knew more and demanded of us more; and we reject, or try to reject, what he said and gave us.

And even if we do not reject, we weaken in our hope of discovering laws, — better laws, — because they will satisfy our evil propensities.

10

So long as the inertia of lying and of the consciousness of truth act at an angle which is less than two right angles, life proceeds along the resultant.

But when the two forces will take up positions opposite one another, along the same line, life will stop, either of its own will, or by the will of another.

11

I think that the cause of the burden and the struggle is mainly due to this, that we have not freed ourselves from care for reputation among men, for the opinion of men about us.

Try to solve your doubts about how to act, independently of people's opinion, by imagining that no one will ever find out how you acted; or that, having acted in one way or another, you will at once die; or, what is easier than anything else, by putting yourself purposely before

men in the meanest, lowest light, — so that, no matter how you may act, you could not fall any lower: "I am a liar, and a pig, and a boaster; I say one thing and do another; I am cruel and a cheat." Do this, if you have the strength, in reality; and if you have not the strength, at least in imagination.

Nothing so confuses us in our determinations and so weakens us in our acts, and provokes such a painful consciousness of struggle as the mixing up of two motives, — of an activity for God and an activity for people's opinion.

You do not know where one thing begins and the other ends. You do not know what really to believe in, whether you believe indeed, or only want people to think that you believe.

At times it happens that you think that you believe in what you really do not believe in; and at times, again, you think that you do not believe in what you really believe. And so my one advice is: try with all your force to remove the care as to people's opinion, in order that you may find out what you believe in.

The best and most convenient means for this is self-humiliation.

And then you can live in conformity with what you believe.

12

Your question as to how and when it is best to use one's forces would be a very difficult one, if it were necessary to give one faultless solution for it; but there can be as many solutions as there are propositions, and all can be, and certainly will be, faulty, like everything which men do.

Yes, tear one fetter and tighten another, and so on until the grave, and die doing this.

And I will tell you what I think in full: such is life, beautiful life, which is given to us alone.

Even so have lived all the best men, and thus lived Christ, and thus he ordered us to live.

Life is beautiful in that, in the first place, when you tear one fetter, which binds you most and is most strong, you tighten another, which is less binding and strong, and so march ahead toward liberation, — and in this there is joy.

But not in this alone is the whole matter, and it is not good and not right to look back at this. The main thing is, that, at the same time with the tearing of the fetters and the slow retardation of motion, you feel that by this very thing, with the aid of your own mind, you are doing another work, the work of establishing the kingdom of God upon earth. And I wish for nothing better, and do not wish to think of anything better, than such a life.

Now I shall answer your other questions.

If I were in your place, I should go to M——, not that I should arrange anything there, but I should work with him; perhaps something would come of it: another may come, — and then again, maybe nothing would come of it, but that does not interest me. I speak this from a personal feeling. This would be the most agreeable thing for me. But how is it for you?

In my opinion we must, of two good, or at least not bad, things, always do the one which is the most agreeable, because we shall do this better, and, besides, a greater pleasure is partly a symptom of a predetermination by God.

The other question is as to what I should desire for my sake that you should do.

I should desire for my sake that you should go to the Caucasus to help the Milkers. In my opinion, you are able to help and strengthen them, and enlighten them, — and this is what I want.

But because I want this, it has no weight whatsoever.

The third answer is, that we must undertake as little

as possible, but should comply with those demands which are made right here, at the present time.

The fourth and, in my opinion, the most correct answer, though it may seem general and indefinite, is, that we must serve God, not on this or that mount, but in the spirit and in truth.

According to the meaning of this answer, the whole significance is in the internal activity, with which every external selection becomes indifferent, and a man inclines toward this, a second, or a tenth act, that is, toward such as he has not even foreseen, or chosen, but does it imperceptibly, naturally.

February, 1893.

RELATION TO TRUTH

1

CHRIST'S teaching does not prescribe any acts, — it shows the truth.

But the question as to how to act in a given case is by every man decided in his soul, according to the lucidity and strength of his consciousness of truth. It is determined not that I want to act according to Christ's teaching, or not, but that I cannot act otherwise.

2

If only those whose idle life is supported by other people's life of labour understood that their only justification may be found in their being able to use their leisure for bethinking themselves, — for the work of reason!

But they carefully fill their leisure with vanity, so that they have even less time left for thinking than the labourer who is overcome by his work.

3

"To do the will of Him that sent me is my meat."

What a deep and what a simple meaning!

A man may be calm and always satisfied, only when the aim of his life is not something external, but the fulfilment of the will of Him who sent him.

And again, this clear expression, "This is my meat."

The majority of men do for themselves only what is necessary for the body, — they make their food, and they forget everything which is for other men.

It is of this whole sphere of activity, which men do not do for themselves, but for the opinion of men, that Christ says that we should work in it, doing the will of Him who sent us, — not for men's sake. And of this activity he says that it is for him like food, just as indispensable and just as independent of human opinion.

To do the will of Him who sent us, like eating and drinking, is not for men, but for our satisfaction.

It is this that is needed, and this is possible, and this is the only path of life, which always and everywhere gives the good.

4

I have just read mediæval and modern history in a brief text-book.

Is there in the world more terrible reading?

Is there a book which could be more harmful for young people's reading? And yet it is this that is being taught.

I read it through, and for a long time could not get out of my feeling of dejection: murders, tortures, deceptions, plunderings, fornication, — and nothing more.

They say that it is necessary for a man to know whence he came.

But has every one of us come from there?

That from which I and every one of us with our world-conception have come does not exist in this history, and there is no reason for teaching me this.

Just as I bear all the physical features of my ancestors, so do I bear in myself all the labour of thought, the whole real history, — of all my ancestors.

I and every one of us have always known this. It is

all implanted in us through the telegraph, newspapers, conversations, sight of cities and villages.

To bring this knowledge to consciousness? Yes? But for this we need the history of thought, which is entirely independent of that history. That history is only a gross reflection of the real history.

The reformation is a rude, incidental reflection of the labour of thought striving after the liberation of man from darkness. Luther, with all the wars and sights of St. Bartholomew, has no place by the side of Erasmus, Rousseau, and others.

5

We must as frequently as possible remind ourselves that our real life is not that external, material life, which takes place here upon earth, in our sight, but the inner life of our spirit, for which the visible life is only a scaffolding necessary for the rearing of the building of our spiritual growth. This scaffolding has in itself but a temporary purpose, after the fulfilment of which it is not good for anything and even becomes an obstacle.

Seeing before himself the immense, towering, and firmly clasped timbers, while the building barely rises above the foundation, a man is inclined to make the mistake of ascribing a greater significance to the scaffolding than to the building which is going up and for the sake of which this temporary scaffolding has been put up.

We must remind ourselves and one another that the only meaning and significance of the scaffolding is the possibility of rearing the building itself.

6

The material form in which the awakening of our consciousness of the true life finds us in this world rep-

resents, as it were, the border which limits the free development of our spirit.

Matter is the limit of the spirit; but the true life is the destruction of this limit.

In this comprehension is contained the essence of the comprehension of truth itself, that essence which gives to man the consciousness of the eternal life.

Materialists take the limit for the true life.

7

Every one of us, having come to know the truth, finds himself in a certain position, bound by worldly ties, or even by the nooses of dead joys, of former connections with men. And a man who has come to know the truth first of all imagines that the chief thing which he ought to do consists in getting at once, at all cost, out of those conditions in which he found himself, and in putting himself under such conditions as to make it clear to people that he is living according to Christ's law; and then only must he live in these conditions, showing people an example of a true Christian life.

But this is not so.

The demand of reason does not consist in finding himself in this or that state, but in living without violating the love of God and of one's neighbours.

A Christian will always strive after a life that is free from sin, will always choose such a life, if, to attain it, he shall not be asked to do things which impair this love. But the trouble is, that a man is never so little connected with his own past sins and those of others that he is able, without violating the love of God and of his neighbours, at once to enter into such an external state.

Every Christian, amidst worldly people, finds himself in such conditions that, in order to approach the desired state, he must first loosen the fetters of his former sins,

those fetters by which he is tied to people; and so the first and chief problem consists in opening these fetters in accordance with the love of God and of one's neighbours, and not to tighten them, and so cause pain to him with whom one is bound up.

A Christian's work is not in some certain state, but in the fulfilment of God's will. But fulfilling God's will consists in answering all the demands of life in the way in which this is demanded by the love of God and of men; and so it is impossible to determine the nearness or remoteness of oneself and of others from Christ's ideal, by judging from the state a man is in, or from those acts which he is committing.

A Christian's turning away from the worldly life will always be one and the same; it cannot change, and so the acts of a Christian will always incline toward getting away from evil vanity, from luxury, from the cruelty of a worldly life, and in coming to the lowest state, which is most despised in a worldly sense.

But the state in which a Christian will find himself will depend on the conditions in which he was overtaken by the recognition of the truth and on the degree of his sensitiveness to the sufferings of others.

His acts may take him to the gallows, to the prison, to a night-lodging house,— but they may take him also into a palace and to a ball.

What is important is not the state a man is in, but the acts which have brought him to this state; and God alone can be the judge of these acts.

You will say, "Therefore a man, in professing the Christian teaching, may, under the pretext of not wishing to offend his near friends, continue to live a sinful life, justifying himself by his professed love of God and of his neighbours."

"Yes, he may."

He may as much as a man, who has prepared for him-

self a sinless state (or such as seems to him to be such), the state of the agriculturist, may live in it, only in order to boast of this state before other men. In either case the judgment is impossible.

In either case the peril is the same.

In the first the peril consists in this, that, continuing to live, for the sake of the love of men, in the worldly conditions of life, a man is tempted by these worldly conditions of life and uses them, not because he cannot help using them, but because of his weakness, — I have frequently experienced this myself.

For the second the peril is this, that, having at once placed himself under those conditions of life which are considered righteous, a man lives in these conditions, without trying to walk on toward the perfection of love, and priding himself on his state, hates and despises all those who are not in the same state with him, — I have experienced this, too, only not so often.

The path is narrow in both cases, and only he who walks on it and God know whether he is on that path. It is impossible for one to judge of another, both on account of the difference of their positions, and still more on account of the difference in the degree of the spiritual sensitiveness.

One man, by forsaking his wife, or mother, or father, by offending and angering them, almost commits no bad act by it, because he does not feel the pain he is causing; another, who has done the same act, has committed a mean act, because he fully appreciates the pain which he is causing.

We can judge of the wealth, the beauty, the strength of men, but of the degree of their morality we are, not exactly prohibited, but unable to judge. And this is a great good. If we were able to judge, we could not love certain people, and since we cannot judge, we have no obstacle against loving all.

All we know is what is said in the sixth chapter of Matthew:

"The condition in which people praise a man is not more advantageous for him than that in which they curse him."

In the first case under our observation the desire for human praise may be mixed in with the work of God; in the second, if anything is done for God, it is done only for Him.

A man is walking off the road; he walks across fields and is suffering, and finally finds the road; he walks on it himself, and shows it also to other men. Is it possible that the men who have been put on the road, upon noticing that the man who indicated the road to them is again walking across fields, are able to imagine that the man who has shown them the road has had some misgivings as to preferring the road to trackless fields? Is it possible they themselves can have any misgivings as to this, that it is better to walk along the road, when they see that he who has led them out on the road is not walking on it?

Is it possible that those who have been brought out on the road will not go? And what of it, if he who brought them out is still walking across the fields? There must be some invisible cause for it, — a ravine or a brook.

8

Last night the plashing of the water in the basin awoke me. I called my wife, thinking that she was washing herself. She was asleep: it was a mouse that had fallen into the basin and was struggling to get out.

We have had conflicts before on account of mice, and these conflicts have caused me to reflect. It would happen that a mouse would get into a mouse-trap, which somebody else had set.

I take it, to carry it out, and to let the mouse out in the yard.

My wife says, "You had better not touch it: I will take it out myself and will have it killed."

I leave it to her, knowing that the mouse will be killed.

But to-day, as I was lying and wanting to go to sleep, I heard this tiny creature struggle as it was drowning, and I understood that it was not right, and that I had done wrong, when I had permitted the mice to be killed, when I had had the chance to save them. I saw that I did not do it in order not to violate love, but in order to avoid a small unpleasantness.

This is bad in our situation: we permit not mice, but men to perish, doing other people a pleasure, only to avoid a small unpleasantness.

It is this that we should remember and not forget for a minute.

9

The rule, "Always tell the truth," cannot be put on a par with the other commandments of Christ.

This rule, as a rule, stands very much lower and, as a rule, cannot even be expressed. But as an absolute condition of serving God it is no longer a rule, but the very essence of the teaching, and stands even higher than the five commandments. "I am the life, the way, and the truth."

And so a Christian cannot depart from the truth. The truth is the *conditio sine qua non* of his life. And so, when we speak of truthfulness, as of a practical rule, there results a misunderstanding from it.

It is the same as though we should say, "You must always breathe." The moment this is said, instead of the confirmation that you cannot live without breathing, there

may at once arise the questions, "but how when I am choking or when I am listening intently, — must I breathe then, or not?"

Truth, truthfulness, is the teaching itself, and so, he who lives by the teaching will strive toward the truth and will be afraid of every departure from it. But this rule cannot compel him to be truthful.

10

Diseases and sins, — these are the same as motion and heat: one passes into the other.

Diseases are for the most part consequences of sin, and to free ourselves from them, we must free ourselves from sin, — error. Living in error, we must know that we live in disease, which, if it has not yet appeared, will inevitably make its appearance.

What is also important is this, that every man, in subjecting himself to diseases, bears the responsibility for the errors of others, — for his ancestors and his contemporaries; and that everybody who lives in error introduces disease and suffering among others, — his contemporaries and his descendants. But every one who lives without disease is under obligation for it to others, and every one, in freeing himself from error, cures not himself alone (one cannot cure oneself alone) but also his descendants and contemporaries.

11

I wish to say something about the meaning of science, which destroys superstition, false concepts, — namely, about the meaning of this activity of science.

Science destroys false concepts, — that is true, but it is not possible on its path to get along without false concepts, without superstition. There will be no vault of heaven, there will be no devil, there will be no personal

God; but, instead, there will be the imponderable, but elastic ether; there will be the forces of spiritism and many things more.

A man who recognizes the heavens to be a firm vault, who recognizes the devil and the miracles of the saints, and a man who recognizes the atoms and spiritism, in no way differ in their receptiveness, in their adaptability for the recognition of truth and for a moral activity. They differ, so to speak, according to their mental age. One is a grown man; the other is a child or youth. But as a youth may be beautiful, so also may a man; and it is as incorrect to assert that young people are better than the old as to assert that science (a greater degree of knowledge) makes men better, as also that it contributes to their deterioration. Science (a greater degree of knowledge) is inevitable, like age. It cannot be defended, nor attacked. No matter what you may do, it will come, like age.

There exists in man the ability of an inner effort toward the good, toward truth, which the believer calls grace. There exists the possibility of this effort, and this effort may be directed toward goodness and truth, but it cannot be directed toward science.

The scientific acquisitions take place, like everything else, including the striving after truth and goodness, according to the laws of necessity. And the great mistake of the direction of this small circle of men, called the intellectuals, is this, that, busying themselves with science, they imagine that they are doing exactly what is demanded of a man who is able at will to make efforts for the attainment of goodness and truth.

The occupations with the sciences are special occupations, which fill a man's leisure and which serve for the advantage of other men, — just such occupations as the making of tarts, or of lamps, or of anything you please. But our unfortunate youth ascribes to these occupations

the meaning of a moral activity. This is where the trouble is.

The occupations themselves do not lighten the moral activity one hair's breadth. Amidst peasants who are sectarians there are many sensitive moral personalities, and their ignorance of science does not hurt them. And there are among the masses many personalities who are not sensitive, who are coarse, — and they will not go beyond Iberian relics, and so forth.

The same is true of the intellectual classes: some are not kept by the highest knowledge from seeing wherein lies man's true activity, while others (no matter how you may expand for them the sphere of knowledge) will stick fast in atoms and forces, as in the Iberian image and in the relics, and they think that in them is everything, and that there is nothing else to do but to know how to place a taper before the Virgin of the Iberian chapel and how to study matter.

But if the question is put like this, "Need men know what they know now?" the answer will be, "Of course, they need to know it, just as one has to be grown and cannot remain a child."

But it is impossible to preach science, which is precisely what is attempted among us, just as it is impossible to preach that a man should have a beard growing before the time for it has come.

VI.

LIFE AND METAPHYSICS

1

In proportion as we begin to understand the vital, that is the true, teaching of Christ, the metaphysical questions recede farther and farther from us, and when the vital significance becomes absolutely clear, the possibility of any interest in them is completely removed, and so also the possibility of any disagreement in metaphysical questions.

There are so many direct, imperative, ever-present, and vastly important affairs for a disciple of Christ, that he has no time to busy himself with metaphysics.

As a good workman certainly does not know all the details of his master's life, while the lazy workman dilly-dallies in the kitchen and finds out all about it, — how many children the master has, and what he eats, and how he dresses, — and in the end none the less gets all mixed up and finds out nothing of importance, but only misses his work, — even such is the difference between metaphysicians and Christ's true disciples.

What is important is to recognize God as a master and to know what He demands of me, but what He Himself is and how He lives, I shall never find out, because I am not a match for Him.

I am a labourer, and He is the master.

2

Who will deny that it is God who is doing everything good in me?

But the question whether He is external is dangerous.

I cannot say anything about it.

He is everything; I am not everything, hence He is in me. But I know Him only because there is in me something divine.

But this is a dangerous and, I am afraid, blasphemous metaphysics.

3

Lately a thought which braces me up has become clear to me.

The moral law, Christ's law, his five commandments, — this is the eternal law which will not pass, because it will be fulfilled.

It is as indispensable, inevitable a law as the law of gravity, the laws of chemical combinations, and other physical laws.

It must be assumed that those physical laws have wavered just as much, have not been common to all the phenomena, have been worked out; but all these laws have not changed so long as everything has not changed, and finally they became a necessity.

The same is true of the moral law: it is worked out by us.

We toss hither and thither, and after billions of false paths find the one true path, and this path is established.

And so we know through reason that this must be so, and we feel this with our whole being.

The time will come that this will be so, and this will be just as firm as all the other laws of Nature. Then there will be worked out new laws.

I am very much pleased with this thought, — it gives me great force and firmness.

4

There is one means for doing something, and that is, to prepare the tools of work, to introduce order into it: feed the horse, harness it nicely, don't jerk it, but drive smoothly, and then it will take you a long distance.

The same is true of one's work:

(1) To feed, that is, to feed on faith, — religion, the thought of the common life and personal death.

(2) To find an application for one's activity.

(3) Not to be restive, not to be in haste, and not to stop.

This much in regard to the question of activity.

And not to do a thing there is one means, — elsewhere to let out the water which tears down the dam.

In life this water is strong desire, — and then work at the agreeable, incessant work.

5

If an ear skips the machine, it is an ear.

When it gets into the machine, it is a grain, then flour, then bread, then blood, then nerves, then thought, and as soon as it is thought, it is all, that is, no longer an ear, but that from which is rye, and bread, and the swine, and the tree, and everything, that is, God.

It gets into the brain, and from there it may find its way into God, into the source of everything.

In man, in his life, in the brain, in reason, is the source of everything. Not the source, but the part which unites, which blends with the beginning of all.

Every vital phenomenon, every impression, which a man receives may pass through man as through a conductor, and may reach his pith and there unite with its beginning.

Man's problem and fortune is to form of himself an

endless, free, primary centre, and not a secondary, organic enslaved conductor.

This is not clear for others, but it is for me.

6

It is possible correctly to solve an equation with one unknown, only when by x we actually mean one absolutely unknown quantity, which is to be determined in the solution of the equation.

If a man, in solving this equation, should arbitrarily determine the quantity of the real number, he naturally would not be able after that freely and correctly to solve the equation, but would bend all his operations on the figures and all his considerations to one end, — to prove that x precisely equals the quantity which he has determined in advance.

The same is true with the questions of life. It is possible correctly to solve every vital question that arises, only in case a man really is conscientious in recognizing this question as open to him, and is sincerely prepared to receive any solution to which he may be brought by the free, unbiassed indications of his conscience and reason.

And yet, as frequently in such cases, a man, sometimes even without noticing it himself, has in advance determined in what sense the question has to be solved, and then only picks out in himself such motives and considerations as would exactly bring him to the predetermined solution of the question.

Such solutions of the equations with predetermined x's are met with at every step.

VII.

DOUBT

1

How can one ask, "Can I? Can I serve men? Can I live?"

This is the one thing which each of us can do.

If love and the desire to serve men moves man, he can do everything, — he can give his life for others, — that is, he can reach the limits of infinite ministration.

But the question as to whether I can give this or that signifies only, "In so far as I err, doing this or that."

Now the error is due to this, that in place of the legitimate mover of life there has come to stand some kind of an abomination; that here and there the lie has roiled my love.

Who can, outside of myself, find out how much dirt, lie, and real force there is in my moving force?

I alone know this of myself, and everybody knows this only of himself.

If there is any doubt, there is dirt.

And if there is dirt, it has to be thrown out. And to the extent to which the dirt has been thrown out, every one of us is powerful to do everything in the service of men.

June, 1887.

2

We all know what we need, and we know where to look for explanations, if there is something we do not know.

In your questions the answers are included. "You will learn from me, because I am meek and humble, everything is good and easy for me."

We believe that for an humble and meek man everything is easy and good.

We believe it, but we begin to live, and we feel that our yoke is not good or our burden light.

What does this mean?

One or the other: either it is not true that for the humble and meek man everything is good and everything light, or else we are not sufficiently meek and humble. Not that we do not wish to be such, but because behind us hangs the ballast of past years and the habit of error.

It is this that I answer in reply to the question: "Should we suffer and keep quiet, or suffer and seek a remedy?"

Suffer, if you have not learned to rejoice, and learn to rejoice.

This, in my opinion, answers all three questions.

November, 1887.

3

There cannot help but be an agreement with truth and its recognition, — it is in all men, even in those who call it names and go counter to it.

That we have all been and shall be in agreement, there is, thank God, no longer a moment of doubt, — what gives pleasure is when men stop struggling in vain against truth, and find happiness in it.

4

There are moments when a man stops believing in the life of the spirit.

This is not unbelief, but periods of belief in the life of the flesh.

Suddenly a man begins to fear death.

This always happens when he is distracted by something, and he again begins to believe in this, that the carnal life is the life, just as in the theatre one can forget oneself and come to believe that what one sees on the stage is taking place in reality, and become frightened at what one sees on the stage.

The same happens in life.

Only after a man has come to understand that his life is not on the stage, but in the pit, that is, not in the personality, but outside it, it sometimes happens that, from old habit, he again falls into the temptation of the illusion, and he feels ill at ease.

But these minutes of the illusion cannot, however, convince me that what is taking place in front of me (with my carnal life) is taking place in reality.

During such periods of dejection of spirit one must treat oneself as a sick man, — one must not stir.

5

The seed recognizes its integument as its real ego, and is worried and weeps, because it will perish.

But it grew out of a seed, fell out of an ear, and again, perishing and throwing up its integument, produces an ear, which is full of seeds.

"The seed shall not come to life unless it perish."

VIII.

DISSATISFACTION

1

DISSATISFACTION is a sign of people who are walking on the road and not standing still, as we should like to.

A joyous sensation!

September, 1886.

2

A bad ploughman (who is unreliable for the kingdom of God) is he who looks back, and, we may add, he who looks forward, and not at his furrow.

To think what I could do, if it were so and so, and I were there or there, or how much I have done, weakens me for life as much as to think in advance of what I can do, and of how important will be what I shall do.

It is necessary to throw out of our heads the comparison of our present life with any preceding, or with the subsequent life, for the simple reason that there is no subsequent and no preceding life, but only a concept of it; there is only the present life, and it alone is important and sacred.

To ask for a higher essence with fancies, and to subject this essence to fancies is a great mistake (sin).

October, 1886.

3

Dissatisfaction with oneself, the consciousness of the incompatibility of life with the demands of the heart, I

know in my own case, and I ask you for this one thing, do not speak of it, do not think of it, do not mention it even to yourself.

It is the same as though a pilgrim who is going to Jerusalem should be constantly thinking of how much he has marched already, and of how much walking there is ahead of him.

These thoughts can only weaken his energy.

We must think of the nearest stop, if we must think of the future at all.

Of course, this has reference only to those who go the right way.

Even if it should happen that one of them should lose his way and find himself again in the old place, from which he had started, this ought by no means to discourage him. He will know the road better, and will still continue to walk.

The Chinese wisdom says, "Renovate thyself every day from the beginning, and again from the beginning."

I like this very much, and I try to do so, and for me it is sufficient to know that, by looking back, I see that I am advancing, and not retreating. This knowledge is sufficient for me, to make me live cheerfully, with the assurance that I am on the right road.

How much do I walk in a day? This is another question. I try to walk as much as possible, but it frequently happens that I walk less and lose time, rest, — I rest often, — and stand, when I might walk.

Don't feel bad about the lethargy, — it has to be, like sleep.

There must be, it seems to me, dissatisfaction with oneself, and not with others, and I frequently console myself with the thought that I am not yet entirely lost, because I am constantly dissatisfied with myself. But I know what I am dissatisfied with, — with my definite abominations, in the liberation from which nobody can

help me, and the work over which forms my whole life. But I do not worry about the circle in which I live, about the external conditions of my life, because I know through experience that this or that circle, these or those conditions of life result from my greater or lesser nearness to Christ and truth.

I live as I live, not because the enlightenment found me in grievous, oppressive conditions (as I used to think), but because I am bad. In proportion as I am and shall be better, the circle and the external conditions will be better. If I were a saint, the circle and the external conditions would be ideal, I should be living as I present to myself the lives of Christ's disciples, that is, as a mendicant, a vagrant, a servant of all men, and I do not despair even now, because this is none the less in my power.

It is just as impossible to stand better, nearer to the truth in consequence of external conditions, as it is to sit astride a stick, take hold of it with both hands, and raise oneself.

The external conditions of life, the forms of life, union, all these are consequences of the internal perfection, approach to Christ.

Seek the kingdom of God, which is within you, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

4

Most stupid dejection! I feel bad because the seeds sown, not mine, but God's, are hidden in the ground and grow up in it, and do not come to the surface, as I, in my stupidity, wish that it should be, so that I may see that the seeds are intact.

5

It seems to me that a man must make it his first rule to be happy and satisfied; he must be ashamed, as of a

bad act, of his dissatisfaction, and should know that if anything is not going right with a person, he has no time to talk about it, but must at once mend what presses or is not going right.

How are that form and those conditions to be found which are best?

If all the greatest sages of the world were called together, they, too, would be unable to find those forms even for one best known man.

There is one thing which I have noticed, namely this, that the longer a man lives, the more he complies with the demands made on him, the less he is interested in the arrangement of life, and the more disgusting is the arrangement itself.

6

All people are assailed by bad minutes, which for the most part have a physical cause.

Above all, it is necessary to avoid for the condition of general sadness and irritation substituting causes for this sadness and this irritation.

"I feel sad, I am irritated."

"Why? At what?"

When a man has reached the point when he sincerely answers himself, "At nothing, for no reason, I simply feel sad and irritated," the sadness and irritation will pass at once.

August, 1886.

IX.

DISAGREEMENTS

1

Do you know how picture-blocks are put together?

One will make out the picture from one pair of blocks, another from another pair. Let him just put up the first pair, and he will put together the rest.

I know from experience and am able now to distinguish people who put the blocks together at haphazard from those who have sensibly put together two, and so will certainly find out the picture, — they will find it out, if not to-day, certainly to-morrow, and it will be all the time the same one and eternal picture.

And so I, reading your disagreements with me, am not even agitated, for I know in advance that we have one, inevitable, and eternal picture.

And so I agree with you in everything, not because I purposely want to agree, but because our disagreement is only due to this, that you bring together the blocks from one side, and I from another. But the blocks are the same.

But with those who have not yet begun to bring the blocks together and who assure us that they see this or that, I disagree in advance. And I feel pained in the company of those who say in advance that nothing will come of it, or can come of it; I feel like being angry with them, and I restrain myself.

2

The disagreement of people is exceedingly painful, especially so because a man thinks of himself that he has not his own opinion, but only holds to the truth; and suddenly it turns out that the truth is not only not understood, but that it even offends people, and drives them away from him.

There is something wrong here, I am to blame for something, I have in some way offended truth.

This is terrible, and it torments me.

3

If there is a disagreement in words, we must, not add words, but avoid them, that is, avoid that from which the disagreement originates, and help one another as best we can.

We are all not only not pure Christians, but full of sin, and so we frequently do and say what we ought not. But at the same time we all wish, and cannot help wishing, and speak, and do what is necessary, because in this alone does our life consist.

If we fail, it is from weakness and former errors, and so we have nothing to prove to one another, but must only help one another.

This I ask of others, and this I wish others.

May, 1888.

4

He and they think that it is very wise to say, "I do not know this, this cannot be proved, I do not want this."

It is assumed that to say this is a sign of intellect and culture, whereas it is a sign of ignorance.

I do not know any planets, nor axes, around which the

earth turns, nor any incomprehensible ecliptics; I do not want to take all this on trust, — I see the sun is moving, and the stars are somehow moving.

Indeed, it is very hard to prove the turning of the earth, and the path of the celestial luminaries, and the equinox, and many things in this sphere still remain obscure and, above all, incomprehensible. The advantage is this, that everything has here been reduced to unity.

The same is true in the moral and spiritual sphere. The question, "What to do?" has to be reduced to unity.

What shall we know? What hope for?

All humanity struggles to reduce these questions to unity.

And suddenly it appears to people that there is some merit in disuniting what has already been reduced to unity, and they pride themselves on this their activity.

They have carefully been taught ceremonies and religion, though it was known in advance that this will not lead to anything and would not stand the proof of their mental maturity. They have been taught a mass of sciences, which are in no way connected, and they all remain without unity, with disunited sciences, and they think that this is an acquisition.

5

Some are affected only by complete sincerity, and sincerity is attained only when a man lays open his soul and is guided in his display by his own motives only.

6

Jesus said at the end of his sermon (Matt. vii. 24–27):

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which

built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

What were the words which he said, that if a man shall hear and do according to his words, he will thus build a house on the rock; and a man who hears and does not do so, will build a house on the sand, and the house will perish?

What are the words, of which he said, as he began to say them (Matt. v. 19), "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

What are these words, and what are these commandments?

Everything a man needs to know and everything he needs to do is said in these words. And we, the Christians, say that we believe in him who has said these words, and that we believe in his words.

But why do we not hear his words and do according to his words?

In these words it says, "Every man who is angry with another man is guilty, and if he calls another man names, he is still more guilty."

Thus it says in Jesus' sermon, but let us look around at Christian people, and on all sides, in the city, in the country, we shall see that people do not stop being angry with one another; on all sides do we hear scolding and cursing. Not only strangers, but even relatives, scold

and curse one another. Brother quarrels with brother, father with son, husband with wife. They scold and curse one another and invent the most stinging epithets, and boast of their scolding, as though they did not understand, or could not do, what Jesus said.

It is impossible not to understand him. It says simply and clearly, "Do not call each other names."

And there is no cunning and no difficulty in what Jesus said.

If there were anything cunning, well, we might find some excuse; but what can there be easier than not to call names?

We certainly do not call the authorities any names.

Not a single peasant ever scolds the rural judge to his face. Why does he scold his brother, son, wife?

Because he does not dare to scold the rural judge,— he is afraid of him.

How does he dare to scold his wife, son, brother? God has forbidden this.

Consequently he is less afraid of God than of the rural judge, or he does not believe in God.

It is said that a man cannot bring a gift before God if he is at war with his brother. It says that, before going into the temple, he must make his peace with his brother.

So it says, and all the churches are full of people, all pray to God, and is there among them one among a thousand who does not have at least ten, hundreds of brothers, with whom he has not made his peace?

They quarrel, hate one another, and make no peace, as though they did not understand what is said.

But it is impossible not to understand,—it says so plainly and so simply, "First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

And about the same thing it says even more clearly, in the same sermon, "But if ye forgive not men their

trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. vi. 15).

It is impossible not to understand this. If we do not forgive our brother his trespasses, if we are not reconciled with him, God will not receive any prayer.

And what Jesus commands is not difficult.

It is not difficult for us to go to church, to dress ourselves up, place tapers, stand through divine service; it is not difficult every day to tear oneself away from work and kneel. Why, then, is it difficult, before doing so, to go to a brother and ask his forgiveness, and make peace with him?

Evidently we do not wish to do what God commands us to do.

X.

PROSELYTISM

1

THE conversation of others is effective and complete only when it is the consequence (almost unconsciously) of one's own confirmation and, therefore, improvement.

2

I frequently reproach myself (in bad moments) for not having insisted on my opinion, but I have never been able to insist, not only in fact, but even in words.

The moment I saw that my acts or words caused suffering, I stopped, or, if I did not stop, I regretted them. I could not do otherwise, because my aim, as professed by me, is the good of others. If evil results, I am naturally to blame, and evidently I am doing something wrong.

More than that: I have convinced myself that the words, "No one comes to me except he whom the Father draws," are the most exact definition of reality.

How this regeneration, this resurrection to the true life, is accomplished is a mystery, which is taking place under our eyes, and it is impossible to comprehend its process.

It is God's mystery, — His relation with every man.

It is not right — it is a sin — to mix up in this affair.

No one is ever able to attract, to convert, another, and the desire to attract, to convert, another man, namely, a certain man or men, is the cause of terrible evils.

It is the sacred business of our life to shine with the light which is in us, before people, before all people.

This is very difficult at first, but later gives greater power and rest.

Not my will shall be done, but His!

I feel like serving these men, and He wants His own, and I cannot interfere with His arrangement.

It is my business to seek His will and to fulfil it.

But His will is the love of all, of all those who are nearest to me, submission to Him, and humility before oneself.

3

I am very glad that in the last three years every vestige of proselytism, which had been very strong, has vanished.

I am so strongly convinced that that which for me is a truth, is a truth for all men, that the question as to when and as to what people will arrive at does not interest me.

Yesterday I ground some coffee, and now and then I watched to see when a particular bean which I had observed would come between the cogs.

Apparently this is an idle and even a dangerous occupation, because, while busying myself with the coffee-bean, I stopped grinding and moved the bean nearer to the mouth.

All will be ground up, if we continue to grind, and we cannot help grinding, because not we, but God carries on this grinding process through us and through the whole spiritual world.

4

We must do what we can under existing conditions,—but we must think and express our thoughts independently of existing conditions.

This frequently confuses me for my own sake and for the sake of others.

How if we do not give the reins to our thought and expression, in view of existing conditions?

This is, indeed, the most sinful suicide!

We must do things independently of existing conditions.

There are many such very important thoughts of yours, and for this reason we eighteen hundred years after Christ live in such darkness that these existing conditions are taken by men for something which might arrest thought.

What I have sowed will come up, though not in my time.

We must sow, forgetting about the conditions.

We must do the internal and the external work: communicate our thoughts and express them.

The consciousness of the illegality of war and violence, and their incompatibility with Christianity, has so matured everywhere that a coarse advocacy of barbarism is needed, in order to support this deception.

5

I want and I think, I want and I believe, and I will work.

Not I shall see it, but others, — but I will do my work.

An excellent thought that the moral law is similar to the philosophical thought, — only it is *im Werden.* It is more than *im Werden,* — it is cognized.

Soon it will be wrong to put in prisons, men will not wage war, glut themselves, take away from the hungry, even as now it is not permitted to devour men or trade in them.

What happiness to be a worker in the clearly defined divine work!

6

If you love God's good, love it, that is, live by it, you also see happiness and life in it. But you also see that the body hampers the true good, not your good, but it keeps you from seeing the good and its fruits.

Let us look at the fruits of the good, — and we shall stop doing the good. More than that: by looking, you spoil the good, you glory, you lose courage.

Only then will what you do be a true good, when you shall not exist, to spoil it.

Prepare more: sow, knowing that not you, the man, will reap.

One sows, another reaps. You, the man, are the sower, — you will not reap.

If you shall not only reap, but also weed, — you will ruin the wheat.

Sow and sow! And if you sow what is God's, there can be no doubt, — it will grow up.

What before appeared cruel, namely, that I am not allowed to see the fruits, — it is now clear to me, — is not only not cruel, but good and sensible.

How could I distinguish the true good, God's good, from what is not true, if I, the carnal man, could make use of its fruits?

Now it is clear: what you do, without seeing any reward, what you do lovingly, is certainly God's work.

Sow and sow, and God will make it grow and will reap what is His, not what you, the man, sow, but what within you sows.

7

I am sad, because my work is not growing as I wish.

This is the same as being sad because what has been sowed does not come up at once, because the kernel cannot be seen.

It is true, there is no watering.

If there were watering, there would be works that are firm and clear, in the name of the teaching.

They are not so, because God does not wish.

8

In the teaching of the twelve apostles it says, "Arraign some, pray for others, and others again love better than thyself."

In this I see something like a guidance.

At least it so happens with me: at first I arraign, that is, express my views, and so become angry; then, in order not to continue the anger, I stop arraigning, I merely express my views directly, wishing (praying) that they may understand; but those who understand I sincerely love, without any effort, more than my own soul.

Here, it seems to me, is the second, the most important, the most difficult stage, which occurs more frequently than any other.

As soon as the disagreement, the mental distortion, is cleared away, in consequence of which it seems that reason is not obligatory for your interlocutor, — what is to be done?

In my opinion, we must pray, wish with all our soul, but not speak, not use that means which has already proved inefficient.

We must with all our hearts wish these people good.

What does this mean?

It means, to love them, love them in deed.

September, 1887.

9

We can and should know the truth and on its basis measure all human affairs, if, as always happens, the sub-

ject of the writing has reference to human affairs. In the direct communion with men, in judging small, private acts which always are the result of more complex conditions of life, which are connected with the private life, it is an entirely different matter.

I am something different in those moments, the best moments of my life, when I, alone with God, strive with all the power of my soul to understand Him, when I have rejected in so far as I was able everything personal and live by my divine part alone.

I, when I write, and when I am in communion with men, submit to their effect upon me, when in me arise all the mean qualities of my personality, when I have no time to give an account to myself of who I am and of why I speak or do what I speak or do.

These are two beings which do not at all resemble each other as to their worth, — one stands on the highest rung of the ladder of the perfection which is accessible to me, the other — on the lowest.

I am not the least sorry because people are angry at me and scold me, for expressing the truth; but in my personal intercourse I feel that in the majority of cases I am myself bad, myself a contemptible vessel, which soils its contents.

When we write, we try to conceal ourselves, not because such a method is accepted, but because we know that what is sacred and true is not we, as a personality, but what this personality comprehends.

When we are read (if we are able to conceal ourselves), it is not we, but the truth, that is loved or hated, and it is not our fault.

But in our intercourse the personality of the interlocutor at once makes its appearance, and, no matter how careful we may be, he infects you; your personality comes to the surface and loses the possibility of correct judgment, correct valuation, and what generally happens is this, that I

loving, want to transmit to another what I theoretically and practically know as the truth, which gives the good; the truth, which is so indubitable that sages and children even cannot help but agree in it, — and suddenly it turns out that my interlocutor is angry, has not only failed to understand me, but during the conversation with me has, in my very sight, thought out a still more insipid sophism (which conceals the good from us) than the one he had before, and goes away from me with this new insipidity, and with anger, directed not only against me, but also against the direction in which I wished to lead.

How can one remain indifferent to such a strange phenomenon?

In the Gospel it says, "Cast not a pearl —"

But this is cruel, and how understand, and how dare determine, who are the swine?

September, 1887.

10

When you see that a man whom you love is sinning, you cannot help but wish that he should repent; but I must remember with this, that under the best circumstances, that is, with the most unconditional sincerity, he can repent only within the limits of his conscience, and not within the limits of mine.

The demands of my conscience from me may be much higher than the demands of his conscience from him, and it would be quite senseless on my part mentally to foist on him the demands of my conscience.

Besides, in these cases it must not be forgotten that, no matter how guilty a man may be, no quarrels with him, nor arraignments, nor admonitions are in themselves able to make him repent, because a man can only repent himself, while another cannot repent him.

11

Formerly I was agitated by quasi-retorts, but now they do not agitate me, nor even interest me in the least.

Let them prove, either on the basis of Christ's teaching, or on the basis of reason, that we must kill, sit in judgment, and punish, that we must believe in the church, and so forth. How can I dispute with them?

Do you know those mathematical quibbles, by means of which it is proved that a part is greater than the whole, or that two is equal to three? If I am busy, I cannot in the least be interested in the solution of such a quibble; but I can have no doubt as to a part being less than the whole, or two being equal to two.

Even so it is now.

I see that I have disputed, proved, unravelled sophisms, only because I myself was confused and did not see what is obvious.

Now the solution of quibbles does not interest me. Besides, I see the uselessness of this occupation, since there can be an endless number of such quibbles.

One has no time to attend to them.

XI.

OWNERSHIP

1

Ownership is a fiction, — an imaginary something, which exists only for those who believe in Mammon, and so serve him.

The believer in Christ's teaching is freed from ownership, not by some act, not by the transfer of his property at once or by degrees into other people's hands (in not recognizing the significance of ownership for himself, he cannot recognize it in the case of others), but internally, through the recognition that it does not exist, and cannot exist, but mainly, that it is not indispensable for him or for others.

How will a true Christian act? He will live, complying in godly fashion with the demands of life, which will present themselves to him, being, naturally, guided by his ties with the past, but in no case will he build his activity on the relations of ownership.

Pupils want to continue studying in an industrial school, or a peasant, who has had his hut burned down, begs for money for another hut.

A Christian has nothing, and can have nothing, but they ask of him, because he is a proprietor.

What is to be done?

He must fulfil what they ask of him, if this is not contrary to Christ's commandments.

If he is considered to be a proprietor and they ask him for something, he fulfils the prayer.

Thus I think, and thus I decide in my own case, but I do not at all insist that this is a solution for all men.

Of course, it is better to give than to receive and hoard (although even here it is hardly better, if vanity is added), but in general there can be nothing good in the giving of money.

It is something like the game of Old Maids.

2

I am still unable to explain to myself what it is.

Ownership, as it now is, is an evil.

Ownership in itself, as a joy at what I did and how and wherewith I did it, is a good.

And it became clear to me.

There was no spoon, but there was a billet of wood. I reasoned it out, took the trouble, and cut out a spoon. What doubt is there that it is mine, like the nest of this bird, — its nest, which it uses when and how it pleases?

But ownership which is protected by violence (by a policeman with a revolver) is an evil.

Make a spoon and eat with it, and that, too, so long as another person does not need it, — that is clear.

The question is difficult, because I have made a crutch for my lame fellow, and the drunkard takes it to break the door with it.

The drunkard has to be asked to give up the crutch, and it is unquestionable that, the more men there are, who will ask, the more certainly will the crutch remain with him who needs it.

3

We can count as little on any kind of work, which may support us in a certain manner, as on the right of

the ownership of land or of capital, and even less, because he who counts on the right of ownership counts directly on violence and does not neglect it, while he who counts on constant work seems to deny violence.

But we are all so spoiled and weak that for every one of us there is a minimum of comforts of life, below which we cannot descend without suffering, and by which our ability to be useful is impaired, and yet it is impossible to make work secure.

Here enters the tragical element.

If I have not one hundred thousand in the bank, I shall not be angry, but if I have no work which provides me with the minimum, I shall consider all guilty.

A Christian cannot get away from living for Christ's sake.

There is but one legitimate life, — to receive alms, for Christ's sake, from him who gives, whoever it may be, and to give his labour to anybody, without casting his accounts, but only feeling his guilt, constantly wishing to give more than he takes, assuming life to consist in this, — this is the only legitimate form of life.

April, 1888.

4

Ownership with the right to defend it and with the duty of the government to secure and recognize it, is not only not a Christian, but an anti-Christian, invention.

For a Christian one thing is important, — not to live in such a way as to be served, but to serve others.

This rule, if it be recognized in its simplest sense, must be referred to the simplest and clearest and most obvious things and must be understood in this sense, that not others are to serve me at the table, but I am to serve others; the horse is not to be harnessed for me, but I am to harness it for others; clothes and boots are not to be made for me, nor soup, coffee to be prepared for me, wood

chopped, stoves heated for me, but I am to do all this for others.

From the fact that a man cannot do everything himself and that there is a division of labour, it does not follow at all that I must do nothing, except mental labour, which is expressed in my physical idleness and the work with tongue and pen alone.

Such a division of labour, in which some people have to do work above their strength, all without exception, old men and children, stupid and talented people, while also without exception, every one of them, stupid and clever people, must busy themselves with playing the piano, or delivering lectures, or reading books, or sermons, — such a division of labour cannot be and has never been; it is slavery, the oppression of one class of people by another, that is, a most anti-Christian business.

And so the most spiritual-mental work for a Christian consists in not coöperating in this; in depriving himself of the possibility of exploiting the work of others, and in consciously placing himself in the position of those who serve others.

At one time I wrote about Peter the First, and I had a good explanation of Peter's character and all his rascalities in his having constantly been very busy, — he built boats, and turned wood, and travelled, wrote decrees, and so forth.

Idleness is the mother of all vices, — this is a truism, but that a feverish, hurried activity is a constant concomitant of dissatisfaction with oneself and, above all, with all people, — this all people do not know.

5

Every man can sin, and everybody is sinful, but the trouble is, when a man judges, he is pulling the wool over his own eyes.

"If the light which is in you be darkness, what is the darkness?"

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The question as to the relations to men has long ago been decided, not only in the abstract, but also in the practical sense.

"Woe unto the rich. A rich man cannot pass into the kingdom of God. Give to him who asks. Sell your possessions and distribute them," and so forth.

A Christian cannot distribute any property, and so he must have no surplus, and there is no question as to how to divide the surplus. If there is a surplus, I must, before being able to judge of the deserts of him with whom I am to divide, judge myself, and judge myself severely, for having a surplus, and recognize that I am sinful and guilty.

There can be no question for a Christian as to how he shall do good with his surplus, but there is only the question as to how to free himself from that sin which has evoked in him the desire to collect and preserve this surplus.

6

Act upon people with all the powers given you by God, and of these powers the chief is not property, but that degree of renunciation of the personal life which you have attained.

If you simply threw away your property, without giving anything to any one (of course, without tempting people, in order to get rid of it on purpose), and showed that you are not only just as joyous, quiet, good, and happy, without the property, as with it, but even more so, you would affect people much more powerfully, and would be doing them more good, than if you enticed them by the division of your surplus.

I do not say that we must not act upon others, help

them; on the contrary, I consider life to be in this. But aid must be given with pure means, and not with impure means, with property.

But to be able to help, the main thing is, while we are ourselves not pure, — to purify ourselves.

XII.

FAMILY RELATIONS

1

THERE is in all of us a strange feature in our relations between parents and children, and vice versa.

There is great love and there is not sufficient attention to their lives.

There is far from being the same serious comprehension of the life of a father, a daughter, that there is of that of a complete stranger, and I struggle for my own sake with this error, which I meet everywhere.

2

It is remarkable how exacting the men who themselves are opposed to Christ's teaching are to those who wish to live in conformity with this teaching.

It is enough only once in the presence of these people to express the idea that, strictly speaking, it would be necessary to act so and so in Christian fashion, for them later to be sure always to demand from the followers of the Christian teaching precisely such a behaviour, and no other. Without themselves sharing the Christian conception, they, none the less, make on a Christian the highest demands to which his consciousness is able to rise.

In general, imperfect and feeble men demand of others the manifestation of perfection, especially from those who

are nearest to them, as though instinctively making demands on the convexity of others, which precisely correspond to their own concavities.

For a man who wishes to follow Christ's teaching, the constant intercourse with such spiritually feeble men is very useful, as a constant verification and reminder.

The demands which are made on him cover the whole surface of his life as though with a layer of sulphuric acid, which, penetrating into all the minutest indentations and chinks, burns out of them the last remainders of foreign substances.

One cannot imagine any better conditions for purifying oneself from one's blemishes.

3

It is evident that the university courses and the ruling science are a holiness for the believers. Put your hand on science, and there will rise sentiments which resemble those that would be evoked in an Orthodox at the profanation of images.

One is permitted to put his hands on ladies with locks and on all other kinds of ladies, but the class of young ladies who study is sacred. In offending this science, which is sacred to them, absolutely everything is forgotten.

XIII.

VARIA

1

THE answer to this assertion is so simple:

"For the common good, courts, etc., are needed."

"Very well."

I am not called to establish this common welfare; even though I may think of the common welfare, I cannot think of it differently than Christ has taught me to think of it, that is, as of a condition of the kingdom of God.

Since I am not called to establish this welfare, my only duty in this respect will be to live in such a way as not to impair the common welfare; but I cannot live thus otherwise than by never and in no form doing any harm to others. But to condemn a man to prison is an evil for that man and for his relatives.

This is so clear and so simple to me, that I marvel how people can find an answer to it.

2

If we all, agreeing in the fundamental, the rational things, should also agree in the details, some one of us would have no reason for living, — he would have to die: we should be repeating each other and could not work out anything real for ourselves and for others.

Such an agreement would be a lie, as would be the

agreement of all men as to what a horse represents to him who looks at it in front or behind: one would say that it has a long tail between its legs, while another would say that it has a short tail between its eyes. If we know what a horse is, we shall not deny that we see the same horse, that we see its various sides.

This is like the assertion that a melon which is cut lengthwise or across is not the same melon. If a whole is composed of all its parts, a full melon, no matter how it may be cut, is one and the same melon. All that is necessary is for it to be full and one whole.

The same thing may be cut from different sides, without impairing its entirety, — and if this is possible, it is only a cause for joy.

There are related minds of one type of character. And, no matter how a man may begin to cut (think), no matter from what side he may begin, he will find predecessors, who have done the same and who make his work easier.

October, 1887.

3

Before me is a sensible being, loving by nature, which can be happy only in the consciousness of this its loving, rational nature. I see that this being is unhappy, and I want to help it.

A horse has become entangled in the reins, — I want to disentangle it, but the horse will not let me.

Shall I pull at the reins, and get it worse entangled?

It is evident that I shall not do so.

A man does not let me, — he thinks that I want to do worse.

Shall I continue what he does not want, not because he does not want the good for himself, but because he does not believe that I want his good?

It is just as with the horse, when I pat it.

Reason is expressed in love. And so, where reason is

dimmed, it cannot be reëstablished through itself, but only through its consequence, love.

It is impossible to verify reason by reason, but it is possible to do so by love, its consequence.

With dimmed mind a man does not believe in mind; as he has not the true mind, he does not know which is the true one, and which not. But even without knowing any proofs of reason, if a man sees that its consequence is love, he recognizes that what has produced this love is rational, and then only will his contorted reason be mended, and coincide with the true reason.

Every child and every naïve man considers that man wise who loves him, and those causes rational by which he is loved.

Only by the love of a rational man for him does another recognize the rational foundations of the love.

If I had such a love for those people to whom I communicate my rational foundations of life, a love like the one which a mother has for her child, no one would doubt the veracity of these foundations.

A rational consciousness of the truths which are revealed to us in our soul and, besides, by Christ, is a great, a very great good; but we are inclined to ascribe to this consciousness too great a significance. We rejoice too much at it, and we stop, as though we have reached everything we need.

It is indeed an enormous step, in comparison with that darkness in which we have lived; but still this is only a step, and even a tiny step, after which must follow the procession on that vast path which is opened up to us in the application of this consciousness to life and love. It does not at once take the place of our cruel, bestial, bilious life, with its habits and passions, by which we have been living, but is poured into our soul by drops. That love, which by its essence demands an endless growth of transport, fills our soul but slowly.

My work over this is only beginning.

In this sense I rebuke myself for not being able to convince or vanquish people by means of that invincible love which is given us.

You walk about alone and think and, as it were, feel in yourself the conception of this force. It seems that I shall meet a man and shall at once drench and cover him with this invincible force which is being conceived in me; but I come to the affair, I meet the man, and instead of the indestructible sword, which I thought I was holding in my hand, it turns out to be a frail, brittle sprout, which I break at the first encounter, and throw away, and tread underfoot.

And again I grow and wait.

September, 1887.

4

You say: "Defend the truth against men who attack it."

But if it is the truth, what can the attacks of the lie do to it? The fact that it is being attacked is the best proof that it is the truth. And if you are persecuted, rejoice and be merry, — prophets of the lie thus have always persecuted, and always will persecute, the prophets of the truth.

There is a period (a degree of faith, of course), during which the persecutions make many men doubt the truth; then there comes such a certitude that there is manifested indifference to the persecution, and then the persecutions give pleasure, showing obviously the weakness of the lie, which is recognized by the lie itself.

"Jesus, son of David," shout the representatives of the lie, although he does not touch them, "go away from us, — why hast Thou come to torment us?"

And having shouted thus, they run away, not as fast as we should like them to, — but still they run away.

5

I have read Médov's work on China. He is entirely devoted to the Chinese civilization, like every sensible, sincere man who knows Chinese life.

In nothing is the significance of ridicule seen better than in the case of China. When a man is unable to understand a thing, he ridicules it.

China, a country of 360 millions of inhabitants, the richest, most ancient, happy, peaceful nation, lives by certain principles. We have ridiculed these principles, and it seems to us that we have settled China.

6

Generally something mystical is seen in our view of life and death. But there is nothing of the kind.

I like my garden, I like to read a book, I like to pet my children. Dying, I am deprived of all this, and so I do not want to die, and I am afraid of death.

It may happen that my whole life is composed of such temporal, worldly desires and their gratification. If so, I cannot help but fear that my desires will come to an end. But if these desires and their gratification have been changed in me, giving way to other desires, — to fulfil God's will, to surrender myself to Him in the form in which I am now and in all the possible forms in which I may be, then, the more my desires have changed, the less death is, not only terrible to me, but the less even does it exist for me.

But if my desires will be completely changed, there is nothing but life, and there is no death.

To exchange the worldly, the temporal, for the eternal, this is the path of life, and we must walk on it.

Each of us knows how this is in his soul.

May, 1886.

7

A writer, an artist, needs, besides his external talent, two other things,—the first, to know positively what ought to be; the second, so to believe in what ought to be as to be able to represent what ought to be as though it were, as though I lived amidst it.

With the incomplete (unprepared) artists there is one of the things, but not the other. One has the ability to see what ought to be, as though it were, but he does not know what ought to be. With another it is the other way.

The majority of untalented productions belong to the second kind; the majority of so-called artistic productions belongs to the first kind.

People feel that they must not write what is, and that this will not be art, but they do not know what ought to be, and they begin to write what was (historic art), or, instead of writing what ought to be, they write what pleases them or their circle.

March, 1887.

8

Life must be guided by three commanders (it submits to them involuntarily), but for the personal question there arises the question: To what demands and to what extent must a man, for his good, surrender himself when all demands are made at the same time?

He wants to eat, and so to go after the potatoes, to invent the best constructed tool for digging them out and to make the calculations and the drawing for it, and to go and wipe off the wet and freezing child and so take him into the house.

The whole of life consists of such trilemmas.

What is one to be guided by in them?

God's will is manifested in three ways: to which of these manifestations is he to submit more especially?

It is not possible to determine this gradually, — it has to be decided at once.

The chief mover (the only one in my opinion) is the service of men. This service may be accomplished in two ways: through mental and through material work.

But the determination which at a given moment is preferable, more lawful, is again decided only by the highest mover, which is not love alone, but love and comprehension, that is, comprehension which has risen to love, or love which is enlightened by the comprehension.

October, 1887.

9

I have convinced myself that a man cannot be beneficent if he does not lead an absolutely good life, and much less if he leads a bad life. By making use of the conditions of a bad life, for the purpose of taming this bad life, you make excursions into the sphere of beneficence.

I have convinced myself that beneficence can satisfy itself and others only when it shall be an inevitable consequence of a good life, and that the demands of this good life are very far from those conditions in which I live.

I have convinced myself that the possibility of beneficence to people is the crown and precious reward of a good life, and that, in order to attain this aim, there is a long ladder, on the first rung of which I have not yet thought of stepping.

A man can do good to people only if others, and he himself, do not know that the good is being done, so that the right hand may not know what the left is doing, — as it says in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, that

the alms may leave thy hands, without thy knowing to whom thou art giving.

You can do good only when your whole life is a service of the good.

Beneficence cannot be an aim, — it is inevitably the consequence and fruit of a good life. What fruit can there be on a dry tree, which has no live roots, nor live bark, nor branches, nor buds, nor leaves, nor flowers?

We can stick on fruits, as apples and oranges are attached to the Christmas tree by means of ribbons, but the Christmas tree will not come to life through it, and will not bring forth oranges and apples.

Before thinking of the fruit, the tree has to be rooted, grafted, and grown large. But to root, graft, and grow the tree of the good, we have to think of many things and labour over many things, before we can rejoice at the fruits of the good, which we shall give to others.

It is possible to distribute strange fruits, hung up on a dry tree, but there is in that nothing which resembles the good.

10

A marvellous night. It was so clear to me that our life is the fulfilment of a duty imposed upon us. And everything is done so that the fulfilment may be joyous.

Everything is bathed in joy.

Sufferings, losses, death, — all this is good.

Sufferings produce happiness and joy, as labour produces rest, pain — the consciousness of health, the death of near friends — the consciousness of duty, because this is the one consolation.

One's own death is a calming.

But the reverse cannot be said. Rest does not produce fatigue, health — pain, the consciousness of duty — death.

Everything is joy, so long as there is the consciousness of duty.

Man's life is to us a familiar wave, which is all clothed in splendour and joy.

11

It is frequently said (I used to say so) that the censorship, violence in general, attains the opposite results.

This is frequently said as a paradox; but this is the real truth, the obvious truth, just as indubitable as this, that by closing the shutter in the stove you help the combustion of the fuel.

If the censorship grieved us, this would prove that we are just as near-sighted as they.

They work for the same God, only we can believe that we are willing workers, while they are unwilling ones.

I remember, the other day I tried to count up those who shared our view, and I counted them all on my fingers; now I see that we must not count by men, but by different phenomena.

Now there, now here, amidst the darkness, sparks burn up.

I see them, and I rejoice at them.

12

It seems to me that the terror of death is physical, a physical ailment, like the toothache, rheumatism, and that we must act toward this condition precisely as toward physical suffering, without ascribing to it a hair's worth more significance.

Well, you have a toothache or a stomach-ache, or you are assailed by sadness and your heart is pained. Let it pain me, what is that to me? Either it will pain me and pass, or I shall indeed die from this pain. In either case there is nothing bad about it.

It seems to me that it is possible not to be afraid of one's pain; when one knows it from experience, this means, to take away from it what is tormenting.

This is physical pain, and to vanquish it, to make it inoffensive, we must agree with it, and not think, as we do, of a struggle with it. Else we prepare ourselves for the struggle, and in our imagination we exaggerate, are intimidated by it.

Of course, the chief means of security is the habit of thought, the conception of the carnal death.

If we represent death to ourselves and evoke in our soul what destroys its terror (there is only the terror, and not death itself), what you evoke is more than sufficient to destroy all the carnal terrors of madness and of solitary confinement.

Twenty-five years of madness or of solitary confinement, in any case, only seem a prolongation of agony; but in reality there is no prolongation, because before the true life which is given us, an hour and a thousand years are one and the same.

13

If we remember and believe "Thy will be done," everything is easy, everything is good; but if we do not remember, do not believe, everything is difficult, everything is bad.

When I was a child, we had a simpleton, Gríshka, for a gardener. In my childhood we used to go in the dark to hear him pray in the greenhouse. After the prayers and the verse about the righteous on the right hand, he began to converse with God:

"Thou art my master, my feeder, my doctor, my apothecary" (if he had been a woman, he would have said, "my midwife").

And no matter what doctors, apothecaries, and midwives there may be, He, His law, none the less remains

the chief thing above us, and He will do as He pleases.

From this it does not follow that we must not make use of what has been done by man for the alleviation of his material life. We must make use of everything, but within the limits of reason, that is, of what is clear, indubitable.

It is unquestionably necessary, when waiting for one's wife to give birth to a child, to call in a man who is expert in childbirth; also, to make use of everything for the alleviation of the incipient sufferings; but in advance to invent means for the alleviation of sufferings which have not yet come, is doubtful, the more so since the means is not in common use.

I am absolutely against chloroform and laughing-gas. God gives the childbirth, God will also give the strength, but to add strength —

There is a view about medicine, which is also ascribed to me, that medicine is evil and that we must free ourselves from it and in no case make use of it.

This view is incorrect.

There is another view, which is, that a man does and suffers, not because this is proper for him, but only because the doctor did not come in time, or was mistaken in the diagnosis, or did not find the proper medicine, or because medicine has not yet invented the right thing, though it will do so in a trice.

This view is unfortunately very common: it is preached by the doctors. It is at the same time the most injurious.

From the first mistake the body suffers at times, but from the second the spirit suffers always.

My relation to medicine will always be like this: I will not seek in advance any help against menacing death and sufferings, because, if I shall do so, all my life will pass in it, and yet my aim will not be attained; but

I will make use of those means for protecting myself against death and suffering which are applied by men who are specially occupied with this matter, and who involuntarily make their way into my life, but only in the limits of what is confirmed to me by the obviousness of its action, by experience, by its diffusion, and by its accessibility, that is, by those means the use of which does not impair my moral necessities.

Here there constantly arise dilemmas, and their solutions are in the heart of each man.

I am convincing myself more and more that the less a man divines, and the more he surrenders himself to circumstances and provocations, the more happy he is, and the more fruitful is his activity.

14

How often a man will make a clever statement, and this clever saying will make him ridiculous!

He wanted to get married, but this witticism resulted in his being rejected.

A jester in the church cried, "Fire!" and the result of this jest was seven dead persons.

Is the jester to blame? He wanted only to jest.

If a man, loading a gun, accidentally kills another, he will feel sorry and he will after that load his gun more carefully; but he will have no feelings of regret, no consciousness that he has acted wrongly.

If a jester, without considering the consequences, calls out "Fire!" in a Catholic church, and the frightened supplicants crush several people to death, the jester will feel more sorry still, and he will never jest so again, but he will have no repentance, no consciousness of a bad act.

But if a man, hating or despising another, makes fun of him, puts him in a ridiculous situation, pulls a chair away from under him, and the other, in falling, hurts his head,

grows sick, and dies, there will, in addition to pain and compassion, appear also repentance, not because the man was killed, but because the motive of the act was contempt, hatred, malice toward a man. "By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned. For every idle word that people shall say, they will be made to answer."

What a profound truth this is!

At first it seems that this is far removed from practical life, something unnecessary, but it is something very near, very necessary for writers, publicists, and all of us, who are constantly committing similar sins.

15

You ask me about the Buddhistic conception of Karma.

This is what I thought lately.

In a dream we live almost as in waking. Pascal, I think, says that if we saw ourselves in a dream always in one position, and in waking in several, we should consider the dream to be reality, and reality a dream.

This is not quite correct.

Reality differs from a dream in that it is, above all else, more real, more true, so that I should say: if we did not know life to be more real than a dream, we should consider dreaming to be all life, and should never doubt but that it was real life.

Now, our whole life, from birth to death, with its dreams, is it not in its turn a dream which we take to be reality, — real life, — and in the reality of which we do not doubt, only because we do not know a more real life?

I do not so much think, as I am convinced, that this is so.

As dreams in this life are a condition during which we live by the impressions, feelings, thoughts of the preceding

life and gather strength for the subsequent life, even so our whole present life is a condition during which we live by the karma of the preceding more real life, during which we gather strength, work out the karma for the subsequent, more real life, from which we have emerged.

As we have thousands of dreams in this life, so this our life is one of thousands of such lives, into which we enter from this more real, actual, true life, from which we emerge, entering into this life, and to which we return, when we die.

Our life is one of the dreams of that more real life, and so forth, ad infinitum, up to the one, last, real life,— the life of God.

The birth and appearance of the conceptions about the world is a falling asleep; and the sweetest dream, death, is an awakening.

Early death, — a man has been awakened, he has not had his full sleep.

Late death, — he has had his full sleep and was sleeping feebly, when he was awakened.

Suicide, — this is a nightmare, which is destroyed by recalling that you are asleep, and you make an effort, and you wake up.

A man who lives by this life alone, who does not anticipate any other, — this is a heavy sleep.

The heaviest sleep, without dreams, is a semi-animal condition.

To feel in sleep what is going on around you, to sleep lightly, to be ready at any moment to awaken, — this is to recognize, though dimly, that other life, from which you have come and to which you return.

In sleep a man is always an egoist and lives alone, without the participation of others, without any connection with others.

In that life which we call real there is more connection

with others, there is something resembling the love of our neighbours.

But in the one from which we have emerged and whither we go, this connection is closer still: love is no longer anything wished for, but real.

In that other life, for which even this is a preparation, the connection and the love is even closer and greater. And in this dream we feel all that may be and will be there.

The foundation of everything is already in us and penetrates all dreams.

I believe in it, see it indubitably, know it, and, dying, shall be glad that I am awakening to that more real world of love.

December, 1891.

16

I have transferred myself in thought to your situation and have suffered with you for that guard, who loads his gun against people, and is ready to kill and at the same time understands Christ's teaching.

I feel this with particular vividness, because I have for two years without interruption tried to grasp this mystery and to comprehend its phenomena, and I have lived in them.

The other day, as I was on my way to Byegichévka, I fell in with a special train of soldiers with rods and full cartridges, who were travelling to pacify those starving people with whom we had lived the year before. They were all like your guard, with this difference only, that they understand what they are doing: this can be seen by their fugitive eyes and because they themselves acknowledge that it is a shame.

The kingdom of God is near, — at the door.

I cannot help but think so, and I shall live and die with this consciousness; the main thing is, that the time

that I have left to live I want to live in such a way as to coöperate with this realization.

It is very likely that I am not doing what I ought to for this purpose,—maybe I am in error; but I know that only in a life which realizes the kingdom of God, in the search of the kingdom of God and of truth, does for me the whole meaning of life consist. I know that it is the same with you, and when I see, as now, that you, seeking the realization of the kingdom of God and of His truth, do not enter into struggle (there is no struggle for one who walks on the Christian path,—everything steps aside before him), but subject yourself to the whole force of temptation, I am agitated for you, I love you with a special, ecstatic love.

The temptations are from two sides: to weaken, to renounce (I am not afraid of this in your case), and to become proud of your strength. I know that you know this temptation better than I and look out for it, but I say what I think and what I feel for you.

The strength with which we conquer and will conquer is not ours, but the Father's, and the more we remove ourselves, the more real is this strength.

January, 1891.

17

All the time I was reading his letter I kept saying, "Amen."

What surprises me is how a man, who so profoundly and so soberly understands Christ's teaching, as he does, can expect anything from violence and its servants. This is a terrible deception! Something like the deception of money. It seems that the Tsar and money can do everything.

If a man, who has no clear conception as to what the good is, were told that neither the Tsar nor money can do any good, he would think it strange.

"What? A man had no bread and he bought it for money and stilled his hunger. Or, — people were sitting in prison, and the Tsar commanded that they be let out, — is this not good?"

It is not, because, if there were no money, nor everything which is connected with it, a man could not help but have bread; and if there were no Tsar, nor that which is connected with him, nobody would be sitting in a prison.

How wonderful! If I had still any doubt as to it being possible by means of money to do good, I should have been fully convinced now, when I am buying corn for money and feeding several thousand people with it, that it is impossible with money to do anything but evil.

You will say, "Why, then, do you continue doing it?"

Because I cannot tear myself away, and because I do not experience anything but the most oppressive sensation, and so I think that I am not doing it for the gratification of my personality.

The burden is not in the labour, — the labour, on the contrary, is joyous and attractive, — nor in the occupation, for which I have no heart, but in the constant internal consciousness of shame before myself.

Please do not seek in these words of mine for any general meaning, — I write simply *au courant de la plume*, to a spiritually congenial man, who, I know, will understand me from hints, who will understand what I feel.

It makes me feel bad, or rather, awkward, when frequently men well disposed to me take me seriously, seeking and demanding a complete correspondence between my words and my acts.

"But how is it that you say one thing, and do another?"

I am no saint, and I have never given myself out for a saint; I am a man who am carried away and sometimes, or, more correctly, always, say, not fully what I think and

feel, not because I do not want to say it, but because I cannot, frequently exaggerate, and simply err.

This is so as regards words. As regards acts it is even worse.

I am an absolutely weak man, with vicious habits, who wishes to serve the God of truth, but who keeps constantly getting off the road.

The moment I am looked upon as a man who cannot err, every mistake of mine appears either a lie or a bit of hypocrisy.

But if I am understood to be a weak man, the disagreement between my words and my acts will be a sign of weakness, and not of lying and hypocrisy. And then I shall appear as what I really am: bad, but sincerely, with my whole soul, always, and even now, wishing to be absolutely good, that is, a good servant of God.

February, 1892.

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February, 1892.

LETTERS ON THE FAMINE

1892

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The "Letters on the Famine" appeared in Russia in the years 1891 and 1892, and later, in 1895, in Switzerland; in the latter edition many passages omitted or corrupted by the censor are given in full, but evidently other variants are due to a revision, no doubt by Tolstóy himself. The letters are here translated from the Swiss edition; but all noteworthy divergent readings in the Russian edition which are not obviously due to the censor are given, when short, in brackets in the text, otherwise at the foot of the page, and are in either case followed by the letter R. The Swiss edition is preceded by the following introtion:

"'The Letters on the Famine' were written by Lev Nikoláevich Tolstóy in Byegichévka, during the very heat of his activity in arranging free eating-houses for the starving.

"At first, this article in a brief extract, thanks to the conditions of the censorship, appeared in the *Weekly Books;* then it appeared in an English translation, and only later, in a translation from the English, in the columns of the *Moscow Gazette.*

"The question as to how this exploit of the *Moscow Gazette* happened remains unexplained, but the consequence of the appearance of the article 'On the Famine' was this, that the administration of the city of Moscow was for some reason very much provoked by it, and began to threaten to expel Lev Nikoláevich's family from Russia.

"Under the influence of these threats, Countesses Sófya Andréevna and Tatyána Lvóvna begged their husband and father to give the administration the statement demanded of him, and upon this occasion Lev Nikoláevich wrote his wife the letter which is given below."

TOLSTÓY'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE

I SEE from your tone that I am guilty of something and that I have to justify myself before somebody.

This tone must not be permitted.

I have for twelve years been writing what I think and what can please neither the government nor the ruling classes, and I have not been writing this accidentally, but consciously, and I not only do not intend to justify myself in this, but even hope that those who want me to justify myself will themselves try, if not to justify themselves, at least to clear themselves of what not I, but their whole life accuses them of.

In this particular case this is what is taking place: the government establishes an insipid, illegal censorship, which keeps people's thoughts from appearing in their real light, and so the involuntary result of it is that they appear abroad in a distorted form.

The government becomes agitated and, instead of honestly and openly investigating the matter, hides itself behind the censorship, at the same time pretends to be insulted, and takes the liberty of accusing others, and not itself.

Now what I have written in the article about the famine is a part of what I have been writing and saying in every manner possible for the last twelve years, and what I will say to my very death, and what everybody who is enlightened and honest in the whole world has been saying with me, what the heart of every uncorrupted

man says, and what that Christianity says which those profess who are horrified.

It is possible to keep quiet. Or, if not to keep quiet, it is possible to accuse, not the *Moscow Gazette*, which is not in the least interesting, and not men, but those conditions of life, with which everything is possible, which is possible with us.

Observe also that my writings, in which my views are expressed, exist in thousands of copies in all kinds of languages, and suddenly, as the result of some mysterious letters which have appeared in an English newspaper, all have suddenly come to understand what kind of a bird I am!

This is simply ridiculous!

Only those ignorant people, of whom the most ignorant are those who constitute the court, can fail to know what I have been writing and thinking; only they can think that such views as mine can change in one day and become revolutionary.

All this is ridiculous, and it is degrading and offensive for me to discuss matters with such people.

I am afraid I shall be accused of pride, but that is unjust. It is not my pride, but those foundations by which I live that cannot bend to the demands of non-Christian men.

I do not defend myself and do not feel insulted for my own sake, but for those foundations by which I live.

I write the statement and sign it, because, as Grote justly writes, the truth must always be established, if that is necessary.

But those who tear portraits have had no business to possess them. LEV TOLSTÓY.

LETTERS ON THE FAMINE

I.

For the last two months there has not been a book, a periodical, a number of a newspaper, in which there were not any articles about the famine, describing the condition of the starving, who are making appeals for public or governmental assistance and who rebuke the government and society for their indifference, slowness, and apathy.

To judge from what is known through the newspapers and what I know directly about the activity of the administration and of the County Council of the Government of Túla, these reproaches are unjust. There is not only no slowness, no apathy, but it can rather be said that the activity of the administration, of the County Council, and of society has been carried to such a high degree of tension that it can only weaken, and not grow stronger. Everywhere a boiling, energetic activity is going on. In the highest administrative spheres there have been going on uninterrupted labours which have for their end the prevention of the expected calamity. Sums are assigned and given out for the distribution of assistance, for public works, and arrangements are made for the distribution of fuel. In the affected Governments supply committees and especial Government and county assemblies meet, means are devised for the collection of provisions, information is collected about the condition of the peasants, —

through the County Council chiefs for the administration, through the members of the County Council for the County Council itself,—and means for affording assistance are discussed and devised. Rye has been distributed for seed and measures have been taken for saving seed-oats for the spring and, above all else, for supplying them during the winter. Besides, in the whole of Russia contributions are taken up in society circles, in connection with the churches, a certain percentage is deducted from official salaries, contributions are being collected by newspapers and periodicals, and private individuals and institutions contribute also.

In all of Russia have been opened divisions of the Red Cross, and the Governments which are not affected have been set aside, one or several to every Government affected, to collect within their boundaries contributions for the affected Governments.

If the results so far attained by this activity are less than what could have been expected, the cause does not lie in the insufficiency of the activity, but in that relation to the masses under which this activity takes place, and with which, I think, it is very difficult in the present calamity to assist the masses.

I will tell later what I mean by the relation to the masses.

Up to the present, two things might have been done: seed might have been distributed for sowing, and wood for fuel might have been cut in the Crown forests.

These two things have not in our locality been done very successfully. In our Government the peasants have everywhere sowed almost entirely their own seeds. What has been distributed has been either little or too late, while in some, indeed in many localities, seeds were needlessly distributed to people who had no use for them, so that in many counties the distributed seeds were sold and the proceeds spent in drink.

Another thing which ought to have been attended to this autumn is the preparation of fuel. From the first of September, it was decreed that wood should be distributed from the Crown forests to those peasants who had suffered from the failure of crops. About September 20th, they made out the lists of townships belonging to certain forest districts, and the announcement was sent out by townships that it was permitted to collect fuel without any pay. The townships which were listed with certain forest districts are from forty to fifty versts distant from them, so that the hauling of brushwood in the fall, while there is yet green fodder to be had, presents no difficulties. And yet I know for certain that on October 14th, that is, for the period of almost a month, there had not been a single peasant in our suburban forest district, and similarly no wood had been distributed in the Krapívensk forest district. If we take into consideration that only in the fall, so long as green fodder may be had, it is possible for a peasant to travel a distance away for wood, and that it is only in the fall that the brushwood, which is not yet covered with snow, may be collected, and that now almost any day we may have a fall of snow, — it may be boldly said that this, the second thing, has been done unsuccessfully.

Thus had the matters of seed and fuel been attended to, but both these matters form but one-tenth of that business of provisioning which is before us; so that, judging from the imperfect manner in which that which has been done has been carried out, it is hard to expect that the enormous matter before us will be done better.

All we know from the newspapers, and all that is directly known to me about the outlook in the carrying out of this matter, does not promise anything better. As the administration, so the County Councils, so far know in relation to this matter of the provisioning of the masses absolutely nothing as to how they are going to do it. This

indefiniteness is complicated, chiefly, by the discord which everywhere exists between the two main organs, the administration and the County Council.

Strange to say, the question as to whether there is a calamity which calls for activity, that is, as to whether there is a famine or not, and if there is, in what dimensions, is one which has not yet been decided between the administration and the County Councils. Everywhere the County Councils demand large sums, while the administration considers them exaggerated and superfluous, and cuts them down or completely disallows them. The administration complains that the County Councils are carried away by the general mood and, without entering into the merits of the case, without establishing the motives, write lackadaisical literary descriptions of the popular want and demand large sums, which the government cannot grant, and which, if granted, would produce more evil than good.

"It is necessary for the masses to know their need and themselves to curtail their expenses," say the representatives of the administration, "for now everything demanded by the County Councils, and everything said in the assemblies, is transmitted to the masses in a distorted form, and the peasants expect a kind of assistance which they cannot receive. This leads to the people's not going to the work offered them, and to their drinking more than ever."

"What kind of a famine is this," say the representatives of the administration, "when the people refuse to work, when the revenue from the sale of intoxicants for the autumn months of the present year is greater than in the past year, and when the fairs where peasant wares are sold are better than they have been for years? If we were to pay attention to the demands of the County Councils, we should have the same results from the distribution of supplies as from the distribution of seeds in certain counties, where those who did not need them received

them, and thus drunkenness was encouraged." This the representatives of the administration say, and they — collect the taxes.

Thus the administration looks upon this matter, and quite justly sc, if we consider the matter from a common point of view. But not less just is the view of the County Councils, when in reply to these arguments they give a description of the peasant property according to townships, from which it becomes clear that the harvest of this year is one-fourth or one-fifth of the average, and that the majority of the population have no means of support.

To cut out, prepare, and put on a patch, it is necessary to know the size of the hole.

It is as to the dimension of this hole that it seems impossible to come to an agreement. Some say that the hole is not large and that the patch may only enlarge it; others say that there is not enough material for a patch.

Who is right?

To what extent are both right?

As an answer to these questions may serve the description of what I saw and heard in the four counties of the Government of Túla, which have suffered from the failure of crops, and which I visited.

II.

THE first county which I visited was Krapívensk County, which has suffered in its black soil district.

The first impression, which in an affirmative way answered the question as to whether the masses are this year labouring under especially hard conditions: the bread which is used by nearly everybody is made with orache, — one-third, and in some cases one-half orache, — is black [of inky blackness — *R.*], heavy, and bitter; this bread is eaten by everybody, by children, by pregnant women, by nursing women, and by sick people.

Another unquestionable proof of the peculiar state of affairs in the present year is the absence of fuel. Then, — it was still in September, — everybody complained of this want. I was told that the willow-trees in the threshing-floor yards were being cut down, and I saw that it was so; I was told that all the blocks, everything of wood, has been cut and chopped up. Many persons purchase wood in a proprietor's forest which is being cleared up, and in a grove in the neighbourhood, which is being taken off. They travel for their wood seven and even ten versts. The price for aspen wood, all cut, is ninety kopeks per shkálik, that is, per one-sixteenth of a cubic sázhen. A shkálik will last a week on a farm, so that about twenty-five roubles will be needed, if all the fuel is to be bought.

The calamity is indubitable: the bread is unwholesome, mixed with orache, and there is no firewood.

But you look at the people, at their appearance, — their faces are healthy, cheerful, satisfied. All are at work,

nobody stays at home. One is threshing, another is hauling. The proprietors complain that the peasants do not want to work. When I was there, they were digging potatoes and threshing. On a church holiday they drank more than usual, and even on work-days I came across drunken persons. Besides, the orache bread itself, upon closer examination as to why and how it is used, receives a different meaning.

On the farm where I was first shown the orache bread, a threshing-machine with four horses was threshing in one of the side-yards, and there were sixty cocks of oats, giving nine measures each; that is, at present prices, there was there three hundred roubles' worth of oats. It is true, there was but little rye left, not more than nine chétverts, but, besides the rye, there were there something like forty chétverts of potatoes, and there was some buckwheat, and yet the whole family, consisting of twelve souls, ate orache bread. Thus it turned out that the bread with the orache was in this case not a sign of poverty, but the method of a saving peasant, to have them eat as little bread as possible, just as for the same purpose a saving peasant will never allow, even in prosperous years, warm or even soft bread to be eaten, but instead gives his people stale bread.

"Flour is dear, and it is hard to provide for all these urchins. People eat bread with orache, — and we are no gentlemen either."

The calamity as regards the fire-wood, too, does not appear so terrible, when the details of the situation are known. They have to buy wood for twenty-five roubles. "Where shall we get it this year?" another peasant said to me, complaining of the hopeless condition of the present year. And yet this peasant has two sons who are hired out, one at forty, the other at fifty roubles, and he has this year married one of them, although he has enough women in his house. Besides, the lack of fuel is redeemed by the

fact that in the present year, the straw, though less than usual, is rich, with a good ear, forming excellent fodder. The reason they do not burn straw for fuel is not merely because there is little of it, but because in the present year it partly takes the place of meal food for the cattle.[1] Besides, the potatoes have grown here excellently. Thus, where on a farm with ten mouths there are twenty-five chétverts, figuring at a measure a day, the potatoes will last two hundred days, the whole winter. The main thing is the oats, which bring a high price. But not all have oats and potatoes. When I took the list of the whole village, it turned out that out of fifty-seven farms, twenty-nine were such as had no rye left, or only a few puds of it, from five to eight, and little oats, so that with the exchange of two chétverts for a chétvert of rye, they will not have enough food to last them until New Year. This is the state of twenty-nine farms; fifteen farms are in a very bad shape: these lack the chief support of the present year, — the oats, — since these farms were badly off two years ago, and last year did not sow any oats at all. Some of them are begging even now. All of them are without help, and some of them have a bad reputation; some are drunkards, others do not like to work, while others again are restless people; there are also among them thieves, who have been in jail. These farms are not suffering from the failure of this year's crops, but from the peculiar domestic conditions and the character of the farmers.

Such is one of the villages of Krapívensk County, and such approximately is the condition of the others. The percentage of the well-to-do, the average, the poor, is nearly the same: fifty per cent., more or less, of average

[1] This is so where there is at least some straw; but in many counties there is no straw. The state of the majority of farms under superficial observation presents itself like this: the failure of the rye is equalized by the good crop of oats, which bring a high price, and by the good crop of potatoes. — *R.*

farmers, that is, such as will this year use up all their supplies by December; twenty per cent. [of well-to-do and thirty per cent. — *R.*] of very poor, who have nothing to eat now, or will have nothing in a month from now.

The condition of the peasants of Bogoróditsk County is worse. The crops, especially of rye, have been worse here. Here the percentage of the well-to-do, that is, of those who can get along with their own corn, is the same; but the percentage of the poor is greater still. Out of sixty farms there are seventeen average ones, and thirty-two absolutely poor, just as poor as the fifteen of the first village of Krapívensk County. And just as in Krapívensk County, the wretched state of these poor farms was not conditioned by the famine of this year alone, but by a whole series of long active external and internal conditions: the same helplessness, large families, drunkenness, weakness of character.

Here, in Bogoróditsk County, the question of fuel is still harder to solve, as there are fewer forests. But the general impression is again the same as in Krapívensk County. So far there is nothing peculiar to indicate a famine: the people are cheerful, ready to work, happy, healthy. The township scribe complained that the drunkenness during Assumption Day (a church holiday) was worse than ever.

The farther we proceed into Bogoróditsk County and the nearer to Efrémov County, the worse does the condition get. On the threshing-floor there is less and less corn and straw, and there are more and more poor homes. On the border of Efrémov and Bogoróditsk Counties the state is particularly bad, especially because, with the same unfavourable conditions as in Krapívensk and Bogoróditsk Counties, and with a still greater scarcity of forests, the potatoes have been a failure. On the best fields hardly anything but enough for seed was harvested. The bread is almost everywhere made with orache. The orache is here

green and not at all mature. The white centre generally found in it is lacking entirely, and so it is not edible.

One has to know how to eat the orache bread. If a man eats it on an empty stomach, he has to vomit, and people go mad from kvas which is made of flour mixed with orache.

Here the poorest farms which have gone down in former years are now eating up their very last. But these are not yet the worst villages. There are worse ones in Efrémov [and Epiphany — *R.*] County. Here is an extract from my note-book about a village in Efrémov County. Out of seventy farms there are ten which still can "breathe." Of the others, the people of every second farm have just gone with their horses to beg alms. Those who are left eat bread with bran, which is sold to them from the storehouse of the County Council at sixty kopeks per pud. I went into one of the houses to see the bread with the bran. The peasant had received three measures for seed, when he had already done his sowing; he mixed the three measures with three measures of bran, ground this together, and got some good bread, — but it is the last. The woman told me that her girl had filled herself with orache bread, which purged her above and below, and she gave up baking with orache. The corner of the room is full of dry horse-dung, and the women collect the dung and chips.[1] The dirt of the house, the tattered condition of the clothes, in this village, is very great, but evidently this is a usual thing, because the same dirt and raggedness is to be found in the well-to-do houses. In the same village there is a settlement of landless soldier children. [There are ten such houses. — *R.*] The condition of the inhabitants of this settlement is especially pitiable. There are among them some with small families

[1] The women collect the dung in the pastures, and small twigs of a finger's length and thickness in the woods. — *R.*

and some who are artisans, and they manage to get along somehow; but the condition of the majority is very bad. They are all mendicants.

At the extreme house of this settlement, where we stopped, a tattered, lean woman came out to us, and she began to tell us her condition. She has five children. [The eldest is a daughter, ten years of age. — *R.*] Two are sick, evidently with the influenza. One, a three-year-old child, is sick with the fever, and he was carried outside and is lying on the ground, in the pasture, about eight steps from the hut, and is covered with what there is left of a peasant coat. It will be cold and wet for him, when his fever has passed, but still this is better than for him to be in the room four arshíns square, with its dirt and dust and the four remaining children. This woman's husband has gone away to earn money and has not been heard of. She lives on what she can collect by begging, but the near-by people do not give much. She has to walk a long distance off, from twenty to thirty versts, but it is bad there, too, and she has to neglect her children. And so she does. She collects a lot of gifts and leaves these at home; when the alms give out, she starts out again. She was at home just then, — she had just come back the day before [and she had crusts left to last her until the next day — *R.*].

She is not alone in this condition, but there are some eight such houses.[1] They were in the same state the year before and two years before, and in such a state they are not alone, but there are millions of people all around us who are in the same state. In the same state are always all the families of feeble, drinking men, all the families

[1] She was in the same state last year also, and two years ago; she was even worse off three years ago, because two years ago she was burned out, and her eldest daughter was smaller, so that she had nobody to leave her children with. The only difference was, that people gave more alms, and the bread they gave was without orache. — *R.*

of those who sit in prisons, frequently the families of soldiers.

Such a state is, however, more easily borne in good years. Even in years when there are good crops, the women, though threatened with being beaten or being sent to jail, have been stealthily going to the woods, to steal fuel, in order to warm their freezing children, and have collected from poor people pieces of bread with which to feed their neglected children, who are dying without food.

This has always been! We live amidst all this! In the present year this state is not worse, because there can be nothing worse than that a mother's children should die without help, only this year there is more of this evil.

III.

THERE are many such villages in Bogoróditsk and in Efrémov Counties. But there are some that are even worse. And such are the villages of Epiphany and Dánkov Counties.

Here is one of them: for about six versts between two villages there is no settlement, no village. All there is there is proprietor's out-farms, lying off the main road. There is nothing but fields and fields, rich, black-earth fields, which are deeply ploughed up and beautifully seeded with rye. The potatoes have all been dug up; they are being dug up and ploughed over a second time. Here and there they are ploughing for summer crops. Fine-looking herds, belonging to the landed proprietors, are walking in the stubble. The winter crops are beautiful; the roads are properly ditched and bordered with cropped willows; in the ravines a forest has been started. Here and there are the fenced-in and well-guarded groves of the proprietors. On the out-farms along the road there is an abundance of straw, and the potatoes are being put away in cellars and basements. Everything is finished and well done; in everything is seen the labour of thousands of men, who with harrows, ploughs, scythes, and rakes have walked through all the furrows of these immeasurable, rich fields.

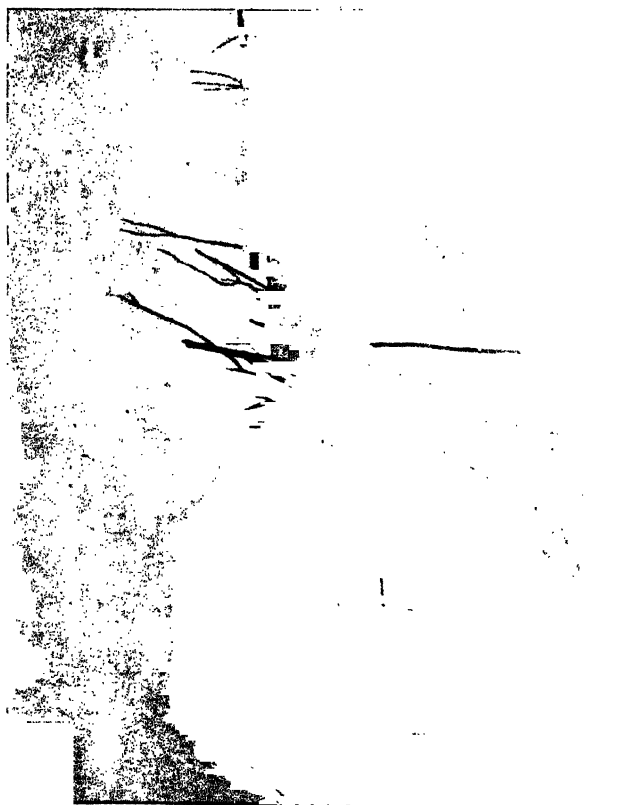
I arrive at the place of abode of these people. Between steep banks there is a large river, and on both sides of it there are settlements, — on this side, in Epiphany County, there are fewer of them; on the other, in Dán-

kov County, there are more. On the other side there is a church with a tower and a cross sparkling in the sun; along the bank beyond the river small pleasant houses stretch out beautifully in the distance.

I walk up to the edge of the village on this side. The first hut is not a hut, but four gray stone walls, daubed with clay and roofed with boards on which there is a mass of potato-tops. There is no yard. This is the dwelling of the first family. Here, too, in front of this structure, there stands a cart, without wheels; and not back of the yard, where the threshing-floor generally is, but in front of the hut, there is a cleared place where oats have just been threshed and winnowed.

A lank peasant in bast shoes with his shovel and his hands throws the cleanly winnowed oats from the heap into a woven basket; a barefoot woman of about fifty years of age, in a dirty black shirt, which is torn at one side, carries these basketfuls and fills with them the cart without wheels, and keeps counting, A ragged, dishevelled girl of about seven years of age clings to the woman, interfering with her work. The peasant is the woman's friend, and he has come to help her winnow and put away the oats. The woman is a widow; her husband has been dead nearly two years, and her son is a soldier and attending the autumn exercises; her daughter-in-law is in the house with two small babies [one, a suckling babe, is in her arms; the other, of about two years of age, is crawling over the threshold and yelling, — he is dissatisfied with something — *R.*].

The only good crop this year has been the oats, which will all go into the cart, — there are in all perhaps four chétverts. From the sowing there is left a bag with orache (carefully put away in the loft), weighing about three puds. No millet, or buckwheat, or lentils, or potatoes were sown or planted. Bread is baked with orache, and it is so bad that it is impossible to eat it, and this



very day the woman went to a village eight versts off to beg alms. There is a holiday in the village, and she collected about five pounds of "cake" without orache, which she showed me. [In a basket she has about four pounds of crust and of pieces of bread as big as the palm of the hand. — *R.*] This is all the property she has, and all the visible means of support.

Another hut is like hers, only it is better thatched, and there is a small yard. The rye crop was the same. The same kind of a bag with orache is standing in the vestibule, representing the granary with its supplies. They have not sown any oats on this farm, as they had not seeds in the spring; but they have three chétverts of potatoes and two measures of millet. As much rye as was left from the distribution for seeds, the woman baked into loaves, mixing in half orache, and they are now eating the last of them. All there is left is one and a half round loaves. The potatoes will last another month, and they say they do not know what will happen after that. The woman has four children and a husband. The husband is not at home, — he is building a stone hut with clay mortar for a neighbour two farms away.

A third farm is just like this one, and its condition is the same. While I was in this hut and was talking with the hostess, a woman came in, and she began to tell her neighbour that her husband had been beaten, that she did not expect him to live, and that he had received the holy sacrament. Evidently the neighbour knew all about it, and all this was told for my benefit. I offered to go and look at the sick man, in order to help him, if possible. The woman went away and soon came back to take me to her house. The sick man was lying in an adjoining hut. This hut was large [built of logs — *R.*], with a [stone — *R.*] straw loft and yard, but the poverty was the same. The proprietor [evidently — *R.*] had taken a fancy to building after a fire; everything which was there he

had himself built; then he had grown feeble and become poor. In this hut two families, who have no farms of their own, are rooming. The head of one of these families is the beaten peasant. On the hanging beds, between the oven and the wall, lay the sick man, covered with mat bags; he was groaning pitifully. He was a stocky, healthy peasant of some forty years of age, with a bloodshot face and athletic muscles on his bared arm. I began to ask him questions, and he told me that two days before they had had a meeting, and that he and a friend of his had taken tickets (passports) to go down-country, and that upon that occasion he had told a peasant that it was not right for him to call names. In reply to this, the peasant knocked him off his feet and began to walk all over him, that is, beat him badly on his head and chest. It turned out that when they took their passports, they set up an eighth measure, and the elder, who had wasted fifty roubles of the communal money, being present, set up half a bucket, for having been allowed to defer his payments for three terms, — and the peasants got drunk.

I felt the sick man over and examined him. He was absolutely well, and he perspired dreadfully under the mat bags. There were no marks whatever, and apparently he was lying, and had received the holy communion only to provoke the authorities, among which he counted me, to inflict punishment on him with whom he had fought. When I told him that it was not right to go to court and that I thought that he was not dangerously knocked up and could get up, he remained dissatisfied, and the women who carefully followed my movements, and with whom the hut was filled, began impatiently to say that if it was so, "they" would kill them all.

The poverty of all three families who live here is the same. None of them has any rye. One had something like two puds of wheat, another had enough potatoes for two weeks or for a month. All had still some bread

baked with orache from the rye given them for seed, but it will not last them long.

Such is the whole village of thirty farms, with the exception of two families which are well-to-do. There is no need of counting them all over, — it will all be the same.

This village half burned down last year, and they did not build it up again. Those first farms, the one where the woman was threshing oats, and the eight adjoining farms in a row, were settled there in order to comply with the rules for insurance. The majority of them are so poor that they even now are rooming with others. Even those who were not burned out are just as poor, though in general those who suffered from the fire are somewhat worse off. The condition of the village is such that twelve out of thirty farms have no horses.

The people are nearly all of them at home: some are calking their huts; others are transposing things, and others again are sitting and doing nothing. Everything is threshed, the potatoes are dug. The village is in a wretched condition, but this failure of crops presents itself as a small calamity in comparison with that chronic general calamity to which these men are apparently subject. What has brought them to this state is fires, quarrels, drunkenness.

Besides the general causes of calamities, nearly every family has its own private, internal cause, which is much more important than the exceptional cause of this year's failure of crops.

The previous elder has this trouble, that he has, under fear of court proceedings, to pay fifty roubles in three instalments, and he is selling all his oats to meet this debt. The present elder, a good joiner, is in trouble, because they have appointed him elder and so have deprived him of the possibility of hiring out. He receives a salary of fifteen roubles, and he says that he could

easily earn sixty roubles and so would have had no thought of the failure of crops. The trouble with a third peasant is this, that he has for a long time been in debt, and now has to pay, and so is compelled to sell three walls of a wooden hut, keeping the fourth for fuel. He has no building to live in and so is pointing up with clay a tiny stone cell, in which to live with his wife and children. The trouble with a fourth man is this, that he quarrelled with his mother, who was living with him, and she separated from him and broke up her hut and went to live with another son of hers, taking her portion with her, and so he has nothing to live on and no place to stay in. The trouble with a fifth man is this, that he took some oats to town, where he went on a spree and spent everything he got for his oats.

Before leaving the village, I stopped near a peasant who had just brought potato-tops from the field and was putting them down along the wall of the hut.

"Where do these come from?"

"We buy them from the proprietor."

"What? What do you pay for them?"

"A desyatína to be attended to in the summer."

That is, for the right to collect the potato-tops from a desyatína of potatoes, which have been dug up, a peasant promises to plough up, sow in, mow down, bind, and carry away corn from a desyatína, which, according to the usual cheap prices for such detailed work, is worth at least eight roubles, while according to the established price in that locality the potato-tops are worth from four to five roubles.

The peasant was talkative; I stopped near his cart, and soon about six peasants gathered around us, and we started a conversation. Some women stood at a distance and listened. Children, munching inky black, pasty bread with orache, whirled about us, watching me and listening to the conversation. I repeated several inquiries, wishing

to verify the elder's statements. Everything proved to be true. The number of peasants without horses proved even larger than the elder had said. They told of their whole poverty, not so much with dissatisfaction, as with a constant irony indefinitely directed upon somebody and something.

"Why are you in such bad shape, and why are you poorer than anybody else?" I asked.

Several voices began to answer,—so definite was the answer.

"What are we to do? Last summer half the village was licked clean as by a cow's tongue,—it burned down. And then the failure of the crops. It was bad enough last year, but this year it is a clear failure. What use would there be even in a good crop, when there is no land? What land? Just good enough for kvas!"

"Well, and how about earnings?" I asked.

"What earnings? Where are they? He" (the proprietor) "has roped us in for eleven versts around. It is all his land; go where you please,—there is but one price to the land. We have to pay five roubles for tops, and they will not last for a month."

"Well, how are you going to live?"

"The best way we can. We shall sell what we have, and then as God will aid us. There is nothing more to sell. Maybe we shall sell the horse-chips,—I have a whole corner of them. When you make a fire with them, it just chokes you. Pshaw! They have been writing us up, they have written us up ten times," said the elder, "but nothing has so far come of it. Evidently the writers are no good. Come, let grandfather" (he meant me) "write us up. He will do it in a mighty way. See what a pen he has," and so forth.

The peasants laugh; evidently they know something, but are not going to tell. What is this, anyway? Do they not understand their situation, or do they so much

expect outside help that they do not wish to make any efforts?

I may be mistaken, but it looks like it.

Just then I recalled two old peasants of Efrémov County, who in a slightly intoxicated condition were returning from the township office, whither they had gone to find out when their sons would be demanded for the autumn practice, and who, in reply to my question how their crops had been and how they lived, answered me, although they were from the very worst locality, that, thanks to God and to the Tsar, their father, they had received seed-corn, and now would receive for their provisions thirty pounds to each person until Lent, and after Lent would get as much as a pud and a half each.

That the people of this Efrémov village will not be able to live through the winter without starving, or at least dying from diseases, due to the famine and to bad food, if they do not do something, is as certain as that a beehive without honey, being left in the open, will die out toward spring.

So here is the question: will they do something? So far it looks as if they would not. Only one of them has sold everything and is going to Moscow. The others seem to be waiting for something.

[The others do not seem to understand their situation. Do they really not understand their condition, or are they waiting to be helped from without, or are they like children who have fallen through an ice-hole or have lost their way, and who in the first moment do not understand their condition and laugh at its unfamiliarity? Maybe both. But what is certain is, that these men are in such a state that they will hardly make efforts to help themselves. — *R.*]

IV.

WELL, is there a famine, or not?

And if there is [to what extent? — *R.*], to what extent are they to receive assistance?

All the columns in which the property of the peasants is described do not answer, and cannot answer, these questions. This the peasants themselves, it is true, do not know. Much depends on the mood in which they will be. The administration and the County Council present to themselves the problem of feeding the starving people just like a similar problem of feeding a given quantity of cattle. For so many steers so many puds of hay, straw, mash are wanted for two hundred days of winter. This quantity of food once being provided, the steers are put in the stalls, and we may be sure that they will winter well.

With men the calculation is quite different. In the first place, for a steer or any other animal the maximum and minimum of the indispensable food are not very far from one another. When the cattle have eaten up a certain quantity of food, they stop eating and have no need of anything else, and if they do not get the necessary quantity, they soon grow sick and die. But for a man the distance between the minimum and the maximum of what he needs, not only in the form of food, but also of other necessities, is enormous, — it may even be said, infinite: a man may live on shewbreads, as do the fasters, or on a handful of rice, as do the Chinese and the Hindoos; or he may not eat for forty days, as Doctor Tanner did, and yet remain well, or he may swallow a

quantity of food and drink, which is enormous as far as cost and nutrition is concerned, and besides the food needs also many other things, which may grow to infinity and again contract to the lowest limit.

In the second place, a steer cannot provide food for himself, while a man does, and the man whom we undertake to feed is the chief provider of food, the very man who feeds us and who under the most onerous conditions provides what we undertake to feed him on.

To feed a peasant is the same as it would be if, in the spring of the year, when the grass has sprouted, we should keep the cattle in the stalls, and ourselves pick the grass for them, that is, deprive them of that enormous power of collection which is in them, and thus ruin them.

Something similar would happen with a peasant, if we fed him in the same manner, and he believed it.

The peasant budget does not balance properly, — there is a deficit, — he has nothing to live on, — we must feed him.

Yes, cast the accounts of any average peasant, not in a famine year, when everywhere about us there is only enough corn to last until New Year, and you will see that, according to the crop reports, he has nothing to live on in an average year, and that the deficit is such that he must get rid of his cattle and himself must eat but once a day.

Such is the budget of an average peasant, — to say nothing of the poor peasant, — and yet he has not only not got rid of his cattle, but has also married off his son and his daughter, has celebrated a holiday, and has spent about five roubles on tobacco. Who has not seen the fires which make a clean sweep of everything? One would think that the sufferers from the fire would have to perish. Behold, one has been helped by a relative, an uncle; another has received assistance; a third has hired out to work; a fourth has gone out to beg alms; they

strain all their energies, and behold, in two years they have come back to their old state.

And the settlers, who go away with their families, who for years support themselves by work, until they settle in some one spot?

For some time I busied myself with the question of the past settlement of the Government of Samára, and the fact which I and all natives of Samára can testify to is this, that the majority of the settlers, who travelled by certain routes with the aid of the government, perished and fell into poverty, and the majority of fugitives, who met with obstacles only on the part of the government, arrived safely in the new settlements and grew rich.

And the landless peasants, manor labourers [and soldiers' children—*R.*]? They have all supported themselves even in years when corn was more expensive than at present.

People say that there is no work. But there are also other people, who keep saying all the time that they offer work, and that there are no labourers. And the people who say so are just as right, or just as wrong, as those who say that there is no work. I know positively that landed proprietors offer work and cannot find any labourers; that for the work which is laid out by the forestry department there have so far appeared no labourers, as is also true in case of other work, as the newspapers have written about it. For a poor worker there is never any work, for a good worker there is always work. For a tattered man, who has spent his clothes in drink and who walks from farm to farm and from fair to fair there may be such a thing as no work; but for a good labourer who is known and who is looking for other work while still at work, there is always some work.

It is true, in the present year there is less work than usual, and so a larger number of poor labourers will be left without work; still, a man's having or not having

work does not depend on external causes alone, but on the energy of the labourer, on whether he is looking fit for work [whether he values his work — *R.*] and whether he is working well.

I do not say all this in order to prove that poor labourers and their families should not be aided, but only in order to show how impossible it is to figure out the budget of a peasant farm, the income of which may be stretched to from three to thirty and more roubles per month, according to the energy of the industry and the execution of the work, while the expenses may be narrowed down to two pounds of bread with bran to each man, or may expand to drunkenness, which may in one year ruin the wealthiest farm.

The disagreement as to whether there is any famine, or not, and to what extent it exists, is due to this. To this is also due the difficulty of giving assistance.[1]

To determine the degree of the need, so as to guide all the County Councils in the distribution of assistance, there have been made detailed farm lists according to counties as to the number of mouths, labourers, allotments, the quantity of all kinds of corn planted, and the harvest, the number of cattle, the average crop, and many more things. The lists have been made with an extraordinary display of columns and of details. But he who knows the every-day life of the peasants knows that these lists say very little.

To imagine that a peasant farm spends only as much as it eats up, and earns only what the peasant gets from his allotment, is a great mistake. In the majority of cases what he gets from the allotment forms but a minor part of what he spends. The chief wealth of the peasant

[1] Instead of this paragraph the Russian edition reads: "The disagreement as to whether there is any famine, or not, and to what extent, is due to this, that the property budget is taken as a foundation for determining the peasant's condition, whereas the chief articles of his budget are not determined by his property, but by his labour."

consists in what he and his home-folk earn, whether he earns it on his rented land, or working for the landed proprietor, or living with strangers, or in some industry. The peasant and his home-folk are always all at work. The condition of physical idleness, so common to us, is a calamity for the peasants. If a peasant has not enough work for all the members of his family [when he himself and his home-folk eat without working—*R.*], he considers that a calamity is imminent [something like the escape of liquor from a leaky barrel — *R.*], and he generally uses every effort to look for work [in order to prevent this calamity — *R.*]. In the peasant family all its members work and earn money from childhood to old age. A twelve-year-old boy already herds cattle, or works with the horses; a little girl spins [or knits stockings or mittens — *R.*], and from the spinning there is linen left which can be sold and gives an income. The peasant is out earning either far away, or at home, or as a day-labourer, or he contracts for labour at the proprietor's, or himself rents some land. The old man weaves bast shoes: all these furnish a regular income. But there are also exclusive earnings: a boy leads about a blind man; a girl is nursing in the family of a well-to-do peasant; a boy is an apprentice; the peasant is making bricks or baskets; the woman is a midwife or a medicine woman; a blind brother begs alms; another, who can read, reads the psalter for the dead; the old man crushes tobacco; a widow secretly traffics in liquor. Besides, one has a son who is a coachman, a conductor (a rural officer); another has a daughter who is a chambermaid or a nurse; another has an uncle who is a monk, a clerk, — and all these relatives aid and support the farm.

Out of such items, which are not entered in the columns, is the income of a peasant family formed, and the items of expenditures are even more varied and by no means limited to the food: [Crown, and — *R.*] County

Council taxes, the furnishing of recruits, tools, blacksmith work, ploughshares, links, wheels, axes, forks, harness, wheelwright's work, buildings, the oven, garments, footgear for oneself and for the children, holidays, preparation for communion for oneself and family, a wedding, a christening, curing, presents for children, tobacco, pots, dishes, salt, tar, kerosene, pilgrimages, — and every man has, besides, his own peculiarities of character, his own foibles, virtues, vices [which all cost money — *R.*].

On the poorest farm, consisting of five or six persons, from fifty to seventy roubles will thus be spent and earned [in a year — *R.*]; on a well-to-do farm, from seventy to three hundred; on an average farm from one hundred to 120 roubles. Any farmer may with little effort make it 160 instead of one hundred roubles, and with a weakening of his energy, fifty instead of one hundred; with care and order, he may change the one hundred expenses to sixty, and with carelessness and weakness make it two hundred roubles expenses instead of one hundred.

How, then, can the peasant's budget under these conditions be figured out, and how can the question be solved as to whether he is in any need and to what extent, and if he is, how can it be determined who is to be assisted, and to what extent?

In the County Councils there have been established curators, persons whose business it is to attend to the distribution of assistance according to townships. In one of the County Councils they have even established councils under the curator's supervision, consisting of priests, elders, church elders, and two specially appointed persons, who are to decide how much is to be given to every man. But even these councils, no matter how much they resemble ministries, will in no way help the business of the distribution, because according to the lists and according to what is now known of the peasant families, it is absolutely impossible to determine what will become of them.

In order correctly to determine the degree of a peasant's wants, we do not need lists, but must call in a prophet, who will foretell what peasant and his family will be alive and well, who will live in peace with his family and will work and find work. There are no such prophets, and it is impossible to find it out. It is impossible to find out the needy, and so it is not only difficult, but directly impossible to distribute the free assistance.

People who have little thought of the relations of the rich to the poor generally assume that all that is necessary is for the rich to give to the poor, or that they should be compelled to give part of their wealth, and all would be well. But this is a great mistake. The whole thing is in the distribution. If there is a poor man, it is always because the distribution effected by the laws in regard to the acquisition of property, the labour, and the relation of the classes is irregular; and so, to correct this irregular distribution, another has to be established. But to take from the rich and give to the poor does not mean to make a new distribution, but only to introduce a great confusion into the old distribution.

How nice and how simple it would be to solve the questions of luxury and of poverty by this simple means, which is, to take from the rich and give to the poor!

This would be so nice and so simple!

I myself at one time thought that this was so.

But, not unhappily, but happily, it is not so.

One would think that it is but a small inconvenience, and yet it is impossible to get around it, it is impossible to make a new division.

Try to distribute money to the city poor, — indeed it has been tried, and what is the result?

About seven years ago, six thousand roubles were in Moscow, by the will of a deceased merchant, distributed to the poor, who received two roubles each. There came together such a crowd that two were crushed to death,

and most of the money fell into the hands of healthy, tough people, while the feeble did not get anything.

With a free distribution, the worst passions are roused and flame up; a crowd of greedy people comes to the front, and those who are most agile, strong, and unscrupulous get possession of the article which is being distributed. People generally think that so long as there is something to distribute, it will be an easy matter to make the proper distribution. It is true, it is generally assumed that there will be misuses and deceptions, but that all that is necessary is to be careful, to take the trouble to investigate, and then it will be possible to segregate the needy and to give only to those who are truly in need.

But this is an error! It is impossible to do so. It is impossible to give free assistance to the needy, because there are no external signs by which the needy person may be told, while the very distribution calls to life such a greed, such jealousy, such deception, that even those signs that may have existed are destroyed.

The administration and the County Councils make endeavours to find out those who are truly in need; but all peasants, even such as are in no need at all, upon learning that something will be distributed free, try to simulate, or even actually to become needy, in order to obtain assistance without labour.

But not in this alone is there an inconvenience in the distribution of free or loan aids (this makes no difference, because the peasants consider the loans to be the same as gratis, for they know that they will never be able to return them); the inconvenience is also in this, that the hope of receiving these free gifts weakens the self-reliance of the masses.

[All know that it is good and praiseworthy to acquire through labour, and bad and disgraceful to acquire without labour. Suddenly there appears a new method of acquiring without labour, which has in itself nothing prejudicial. It

is evident what confusion is produced in their concepts by the appearance of this new method of acquisition. — *R.*]

But how shall we wait when everybody is starving? In a village where there is no corn until November, and where, either from laziness or from error, — whatever the cause may be, — the peasants say that there is no work, and do not work, within a week there will unquestionably be a real famine for the women, the old, the very young, and even, no doubt, for the lazy and the self-deceived who are still alive. And, then, how is it to be given? To whom?

If it is to be given to those only who are in need, how are the truly needy to be distinguished from those who are not really in need?

Even if it be possible to distinguish those who are really in need, this will take in, for the most part, all careless farmers, drunkards, and loafers; why is a premium to be put on laziness and drunkenness?

If all are to receive equal shares, as the peasants everywhere demand, saying with reason that if they are to be liable for all members, they ought at least to receive equal shares, so that they may have something to be responsible for; if all are to receive equal shares, all will have too little: for the well-to-do it will be an unnecessary addition, and for the poor an insufficient addition to save them from ruin.

But if all are to receive so much that, by receiving equal shares, the poor may get enough to provide themselves with, there would be needed such large sums [nearly a billion — *R.*] that it would be impossible to find them.

But the chief thing is, that the more aid is offered, the more is the energy of the people weakened, and the more the energy of the people is weakened, the more their needs are increased.

And yet it is impossible not to offer any aid!

In this *cercle vicieux* toss about the gentlemen of the

government and of the County Councils. It is this that leads to all that disorderly mass of measures which are taken against the famine of which we do not know whether it exists or not, — a disorderly mass, because we have undertaken a business which we cannot carry out.

The business which we have undertaken consists for us in nothing more or less than an attempt to feed the masses, — for us, gentlemen, to feed the masses, that is, we have taken it upon ourselves to feed the feeders, — those who have been feeding us.

We have become so confused and steeped in lie, that we have entirely forgotten who we are.

We, the gentlemen, want to feed the masses.

V.

WHAT a wonderful thing! A suckling babe wants to feed his nurse; the parasite takes it upon himself to feed the plant on which it feeds; we, the higher classes, who all of us live by *them*, who cannot take a step without *them*, we shall feed *them*.

It is well that *they* believe us! If they, God forfend, should believe that somebody is going to feed *them*, and should stop feeding themselves and us, *they* would perish, and we with them.

Children were given a horse, a real, live horse, and they drove out with it and had their fun. They drove and drove, down-hill and up-hill. The good horse was covered with sweat and out of breath, but it continued to pull them and to obey them; and the children shouted and boasted to one another as to who could lead and drive and make the horse gallop best. And it seemed to them — it always does — that, when the horse was galloping, they were galloping themselves, and they boasted of their race.

The children had their fun for a long time, without thinking of the horse, and forgetful of the fact that it lived, worked hard, and suffered, and if they noticed that it stopped, they smacked their whip in a more lively fashion and urged on the horse, and shouted.

But there is an end to everything, and there came also an end to the strength of the good horse, and, in spite of the whip, it began to stop. It was only then that the children remembered that the horse was a live animal, and that horses are fed and given drink; but the children

did not want to stop, and they began to devise how they could feed the horse while it was running. One of them fetched a handful of hay from under the seat and, jumping down from the carriage, ran alongside the horse and offered it the hay. But it was not easy to feed the horse while it was running, and so he jumped back into the carriage and the children began to devise another means. They obtained a long stick and tied the hay to the end of it, and began to offer it to the horse on the run, while they were themselves seated on the coachman's box. Besides, two of the children, observing that the horse was tottering, began to support it; they held its back with their hands, to keep it from falling to the right or to the left. The children devised many things, except what ought to have come first into their heads, — which was, that they should get down from the horse and stop driving it, and, if they really had compassion on it, unhitch it and give it its freedom.

Is it not precisely as the children did with the horse which was pulling them, that the people of the rich classes have been doing with the labouring people, when they grow weak and may refuse to pull?

They devise everything possible, except the one thing which begs for recognition, — to get off the horse which they pity, stop travelling with it and driving it.

The masses are starving, and we, the higher classes, are very much worried by this and want to help them. And for this purpose we have meetings, choose committees, collect money, and send it to the masses, but do not for a minute stop driving them.

And what is it that makes them poor and starving?

Is it really so hard to understand this?

Is it really necessary to calumniate them, as some unscrupulously do, saying that the masses are poor because they are lazy and drunkards? or to deceive ourselves, as others do, saying that the masses are poor because they

have not yet had time to adopt our culture, and that we shall begin with to-morrow, without concealing anything, to transmit to them all our wisdom, and then they will stop being poor; and so we have no cause for being ashamed because we are living on their backs, — we are doing it all for their good.

Is it indeed necessary to search for this *midi à quatorze heures*, when it is so clear and so simple, especially for the masses themselves, on whose backs we are sitting and whom we are driving? Children may imagine that it is not the horse that is pulling them, but that they are themselves moving on by means of the waving of the whip, but we, the grown persons, if we are not insane, ought to understand, it seems, whence the famine of the masses comes.

The masses are hungry because we are too well fed.

How can the masses help being hungry, since under the conditions under which they are living, that is, with those taxes, with that want of land, with that abandonment and savagery in which they are kept, they are compelled to produce all that terrible labour, the results of which are swallowed up by the capitals, the cities, and the country centres of the rich?

All these palaces, theatres, museums, all those paraphernalia, all that wealth, — all this is worked out by the very starving people, who do all these things which are unnecessary to them only because they make a living by it, that is, always with this enforced labour save themselves from a famine death, which is always hanging over them.

Such has always been their condition.

The present year has merely shown, in consequence of the famine, that the string is too tightly drawn.

The masses are always kept by us half-starved. This is our means for compelling them to work for us.

But this present year their starving condition has

proved too great. Nothing new or unexpected has happened, and it seems to us that it is possible to know why the masses are hungry.

The society endeavours to aid the masses in the calamity are similar to the endeavours at establishing the Red Cross in war-time. The energy of some in war is directed toward committing murder, and this activity is considered normal, and to counteract it they establish another activity, — that of curing these people who are being killed.

All this is very nice, so long as the activity of the war and also the activity of the exhaustion of the masses, of their oppression, are considered to be normal; but as soon as we begin to assert that we are sorry for the people who are killed in a war and for starving people, would it not be simpler not to kill the people and not to establish means for curing them? Would it not be simpler to stop doing all that which ruins the well-being of the masses, than, continuing to ruin them, to make it appear that we are worried about their well-being?

This lie is always startling, but at the present time it is detestable.

We assure ourselves and others that we are very much worried by the famine, that we are disturbed by the condition of the Russian people, that we are prepared for any sacrifices, and yet by our lives we show that all this is nothing but words and that we are lying, because this lie has become a conventional lie, common to all men. And nobody shows up another for fear of being shown up himself.

If we collate everything which has been written in the newspapers about the present condition of the Russian people, we shall approximately get this: forty millions of Russians are starving, and there is hardly any possibility of helping them. If we assume that all the corn which there is will be given to the starving, which it is impossible to assume, — there will still be lacking one-fourth of

what is necessary for the feeding of all the starving. There is little chance that we shall be able to buy and bring from abroad the corn needed, so that it should reach us at an accessible price, and so one-fourth of forty millions are in danger of death from starvation.

Death from starvation, according to the information of the newspapers and according to rumours, has already begun. Cases have happened where mothers have brought their children to the township offices and have cast them away there, saying that they had nothing to feed them on. They tell of a mother who killed herself with her children; they tell of another who hanged herself, so as not to see her dying children. They give the description of three children who died from starvation. In many places people are falling sick and swelling from hunger, and now, during the warm autumn weather, the famine typhus is becoming epidemic. What will happen in winter, when it will be cold in those places where they generally use straw for fuel, and where there is none this present year and wood cannot be procured any nearer than one hundred or one hundred and fifty versts?

We all read about this, or if we do not read we inevitably hear of it, out of decency shrug our shoulders, sigh, make small money contributions, and say, "Yes, it is terrible!" and we continue our habitual lives.

Even though there are men and establishments which contribute money, and though there are others who serve in the administration and in the County Councils, who are busy providing for the needy, buying up corn, selling it at a low price, making lists of the farms, etc., yet, in spite of the money contributions which a few make, and in spite of the cares taken by the officials in respect to the furnishing of the supplies, our society, that is, all men, both those who contribute and those who do not, those who serve and those who do not, remain, in spite of the mutual accusations of indifference, absolutely calm and

indifferent to what is supposedly a terrible calamity, which is now taking place and is imminent, and which no one denies.

I say that society remains entirely indifferent to the imminent calamity, not because it so seems to me and because I want to say so, but because there is a well-known and unquestionable sign of real sympathy, which now is lacking in the whole of Russian society.

We only know that a man is not indifferent and truly sympathizes with what has taken place or is about to take place, only when this news changes his life; when he stops doing that which he has been doing, eating as he ate, sleeping as he slept, living as he lived. Much more does this sign of indifference or of sympathy show in reference to an event which has not yet taken place, but is only menacing.

When a man at dinner receives news that a man is drowning in the river near his house, and he, continuing to eat, gives his commands about furnishing a rope which is necessary in order to save the drowning person, it makes no difference what he may say about his sympathy for the drowning person, we shall not believe him, and we shall know that he is indifferent to the event which is taking place. Such an indifference now exists in our society in respect to the calamity which the newspapers describe and predict. People go on dining, and show their sympathy by not being sorry for the time which they have lost in giving orders about the rope, nor even for the rope itself. The life of the men of our society continues in its usual current: there are the same concerts and theatres, — if there are no balls, this is due only to the example of the emperor, — the same dinners, costumes, races, horses, carriages, hunts, expositions, flowers, novels, and so forth. Life has not changed in the least and has not been adapted to the existing calamity, but, on the contrary, the famine has been adapted to the

common current of life, the famine *fait les frais de la conversation* in drawing-rooms, fills the columns of newspapers and forms an interesting subject of correspondences, serves as an excuse for the arrangement of bazaars, theatres, concerts, volumes of collections. Life has not only not changed, in order to serve the famine, but the famine has become an indispensable part of life; the famine has come to occupy the place of a modern, fashionable subject of interest, a place which has always to be filled. Nor can it be different; the famine does not touch us, but, as we imagine, men who are entire strangers to us, who are united with us only by the abstract conception that they and we are Russians.

Voltaire says that if it were possible by touching a button in Paris to kill a mandarin in China, few Parisians would deprive themselves of this pleasure.

Why not tell the truth? If it were possible by pressing a button in Moscow or St. Petersburg to kill a peasant in Mamadýshi or Tsarevokoksháysk, so that no one could find it out, I do not think there would be found many men who would keep from pressing the button, if this could afford them the least pleasure.

Between a man of our wealthy circle, — a gentleman with a starched shirt, an official, a landed proprietor, a business man, an officer, a scholar, an artist, — and a peasant, if we were to tell the truth, there is as little connection as between a Parisian and a mandarin.

It is impossible to conceal what we all know! We do not say all this, but it is simply because with us there has established itself among the cultured people a custom of professing love for the peasant, the lesser brother, for the sake of propriety; but we all know that between us, gentlemen, and the peasants there is an abyss.

There are masters and slaves. The first are respected, the second are despised, and between the two there is no connection. They are two entirely different categories of

men, two different castes. Gentlemen never marry peasant women and never give their daughters in marriage to peasants and labourers; gentlemen never treat peasants as their acquaintances, do not eat with them, and do not even sit with them; gentlemen say "thou" to labourers, and labourers say "you" to gentlemen. Gentlemen are admitted to clean places and are let in to the front in churches; the others are not let in and "get it in the neck;" the latter are whipped, and the first are not.

They are two different castes.

Though the transition from the lower to the higher is possible, yet, so long as the transition has not taken place, there exists a most distinct division, and between a gentleman and a peasant there is as little connection as between a Parisian and a Chinaman; so that to allow a peasant to die is the same as allowing the hen to die that lays the golden eggs.

And I do not say this because I have just taken it into my head to say a lot of unpleasant things to the rich Russians among whom I belong, but because it is so. As a proof and confirmation of this serves the whole Russian life, everything which incessantly is taking place in the whole of Russia.

All wealthy Russians incessantly press the button, not even for the pleasure of an interesting experiment, but for the most insignificant of purposes. To say nothing of the generations of factory hands, who perish from their senseless, painful, corrupting work in the factories for the gratification of the rich, all the agricultural population, or an immense proportion of it, having no land from which to make a living, is compelled to undergo a terrible strain of work, which destroys their physical and their spiritual forces, only that the gentlemen may be able to increase their luxury. The whole population is made drunk and is exploited by the commercialists for this purpose. The population degenerates, the children die before their time,

only that the wealthy gentlemen and merchants may be able to live their distinct lordly lives, with their palaces, dinners, concerts, horses, carriages, lectures, and so forth.

Do not, now, the people, as they say, die like flies from hunger, the proprietors, the merchants, and, in general, the wealthy, sit with supplies of corn, waiting for still higher rises in the prices? Do the officials stop receiving their salaries, which are collected from the starving? Do not all the intelligent classes continue to live in the cities for their own superior purposes, if we are to take their word for it, — devouring there, in the cities, those means for the support of life which are taken there for them, and the lack of which causes the masses to die?

All the instincts of every one of the gentlemen, the learned, the official, the artistic, the domestic, are such as have nothing in common with the life of the people. The masses do not understand the gentlemen, and the gentlemen, though imagining that they understand the masses, do not understand them, because their interests are not only not identical with those of the gentlemen, but are always diametrically opposed to them.

We need the masses only as a tool, and the gentlemen make use of this tool, not from hard-heartedness, but because their life is so circumstanced that they cannot help making use of it, and their advantages (no matter how much one may say the opposite to console oneself) are always diametrically opposed to the advantages of the masses.

"The more salary and pension I am given," says the official, "that is, the more is taken from the masses, the better it is for me."

"The higher the price is at which corn and all the necessary articles will be sold to the masses and the harder it will be for them, the better it will be for me," say the merchant and the landowner.

"The cheaper the labour will be, that is, the poorer the

masses will be, the better it is for us," say all the people of the wealthy classes.

Where can there be any sympathy among us for the masses?

Between us and the masses there is no other connection than an inimical one, that of the master and the slave. The better it is for me, the worse it is for him. The better it is for him, the worse it is for me. And under these conditions we have suddenly begun to assure ourselves and others that we are very anxious to bring them out from that condition of poverty, in which we ourselves have placed them, and which is necessary for us.

It is this conventional lie, which by all men is taken for the truth, that forms the cause of the strange confusion of ideas in the people of our circle who discuss the present wretched condition of the masses.

VI.

If a man of society really wants to serve the masses, the first thing he has to do is clearly to understand his relation to them. So long as nothing is undertaken, the lie, remaining a lie, is not particularly harmful; but when, as at present, men want to serve the masses, the first and chief thing which is necessary is to reject the lie, clearly to understand our relation to them. Having come to understand our relation to the masses, which consists in this, that we live by them, that their poverty is due to our wealth, and their famine to our satiety; if we sincerely want to serve the masses, we shall first of all stop doing what causes their ruin.

If we truly pity the horse which we are driving, we shall first of all get down and walk.

First of all, let us try to *rendre gorge*, to return to the masses what we have all the time been taking from them; let us stop taking from them what we have been taking, and then let us change our lives, let us demolish the caste line, which separates us from the masses, and let us go to them, not only as to equals, but as to our better brothers, toward whom we have for a long time been guilty, — let us go to them with repentance, meekness, and love.

"I do not know whether the masses, the whole people, will find enough food or not," will say every man who takes this point of view, "and I cannot know: to-morrow there may be a pest or an invasion, from which the masses will die without a famine, or to-morrow there will be discovered a new nutritive substance which will feed all,

or, what is simplest of all, I shall die to-morrow, and so shall not learn anything about whether the masses will find enough food or not. But the main thing is, that nobody is appointing me to the business of feeding forty millions of people, who are living within certain boundaries, and I can obviously not attain the external end of feeding certain people and freeing them from misfortune, — I can do but one thing, and that is, use my strength in the best manner possible for the purpose of contributing to the welfare of my brothers, considering all without exception my brothers.

And, wonderful to say, a man need but turn away from the problem of solving the external questions and set before himself the one true internal question, which is proper for a man, "How can I in this year of hard trials pass my life in the best manner possible?" in order that these questions may receive an answer.

The common governmental activity, which does not change its relation to the masses, sets before itself an enormous aim, which it does not attain.

The personal activity sets before itself an internal aim, and it attains even the one which it has not set before itself.

The common governmental activity busies itself with the external aim of feeding and maintaining the welfare of forty millions of people, and, as we have seen, it meets on its path insurmountable obstacles.

(1) There is absolutely no possibility of determining the degree of the imminent want among the population, which maintains itself and is capable in this maintenance of manifesting the greatest energy or the most absolute apathy.

(2) If we admit that this determination is possible in accordance with the information collected by the government's agents, the amount of the sums demanded is so great that there is no probability that it will be obtained.

(3) If we admit that these means will be found, the free distribution of the same to the population will weaken the energy and self-reliance of the masses, which form the chief means for supporting them.

Even if we admit that the distribution will take place in such a way that it will not weaken the self-reliance of the masses, there is no possibility of correctly distributing the aid, and those who are not in want will get the portions of those who are, and the needy will after all, in many cases, remain without aid and will perish.

The personal activity, which sets before itself the internal aim, will remove all these obstacles. For this activity there is no question as to the number of those who are in need. For this activity there have always been and always are those who need, and the question consists only in this, how much of my strength I can give to the needy.

It is this activity, which in the present famine year, in one locality (I have seen this more than once), makes a peasant woman, the hostess, at the words, "For Christ's sake," which she hears at the window, shrink and frown, and yet take down from the shelf the last newly started loaf, and cut off a tiny piece, of the size of half a palm, and, making the sign of the cross, hand it to the beggar. And it removes all the obstacles which have impeded the governmental activity with its external aim.

For this activity there does not exist the first obstacle, — the determination of the degree of the want of those who are in need: "They beg Christ for the sake of Mávra's orphans." She knows that they cannot get it anywhere, and she gives them the alms.

There also does not exist the second obstacle, — the enormous number of the needy: the hostess who gives the alms does not need to figure out how many millions of starving there are in Russia, or what the price of corn is in America, at what price it will reach our ports and our elevator, and how much it will be possible to take

under warrant. For her there exists but one question: How to insert the knife into the loaf, whether so as to cut off a thick slice or not. But whether the slice which she gives is thick or thin, she knows indubitably that, if everybody will break off from his own, there will be enough for everybody, no matter how many there may be.

Still less does the third obstacle exist for the peasant woman. She is not afraid that the offer of this tiny slice will weaken the energy of Mávra's children, that it will encourage them in idleness and beggary, because she knows that these children understand how dear the slice which she is cutting off is to her.

Nor does the fourth obstacle exist. The peasant woman need have no care whether there is any truth as to the need of those who are now standing at the window, and whether there are not other needy persons who ought to get that slice. She is sorry for Mávra's orphans, and she gives them the alms, knowing that if all will do likewise, nobody will starve, not only the present year in Russia, but everywhere, at all times.

It is this activity, which has only the internal aim, that has saved, and that will now save, men.

It is this activity that ought to be practised by those who wish during this present, hard time to serve others.

[This activity saves people, because it is that smallest of all the grains, which grows into a very large tree. What one man, two, ten men can do, living in the village among the starving and aiding them, is so insignificant; but here is what I saw during one of my journeys. Lads were walking from Moscow, where they had been working. One of them had grown sick and had fallen behind his companions. He sat and lay for some five hours on the edge of the road, and dozens of peasants passed by him. A peasant was driving home to dinner with potatoes, and he talked to the lad and, upon finding out that

he was sick, took pity on him and carried him with him to the village. "Who is this? Whom did Akím bring along?" Akím told them that the lad was sick, that he was thin because he had not eaten for two days,—that he ought to be pitied. And one woman brought him some potatoes, another—a cake, a third—some milk. "Oh, dear man, he is so starved! How can one help pitying him? One's own child!" And the same lad, past whom, in spite of his miserable appearance, dozens of men had passed without giving him any thought, became an object of pity and dear to all, because one had taken pity on him. The activity of love is important for the very reason that it is infectious. The external activity, which is expressed in a free distribution, according to regulations and lists, provokes the very worst of sentiments, greed, envy, hypocrisy, condemnation; the personal activity, on the contrary, evokes the best sentiment, love, and the desire of sacrifice. "I have worked and laboured, and I get nothing, while a lazybones and drunkard is rewarded. Who told him to spend everything in drink? A thief suffers justly," say the well-to-do and the average peasants, who receive no assistance. With not less malice the poor peasant says of the rich peasant, who demands an equal share, "It is through them that we are poor. They suck us dry, and they want to get our share, too; they are sleek enough as it is," and so forth. Such sentiments are evoked by the distribution of the free aid. But, on the contrary, let a man see another divide his last possessions, to labour in behalf of the poor, and he feels like doing the same In this does the force of the activity of love consist. Its force consists in this, that it is infectious, and so long as it is infectious, there is no limit to its diffusion.

As one candle lights another, and thousands are lighted from one, so one heart lights up another, and thousands are lighted from it. Millions of roubles will do less than

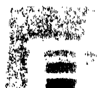
even a small diminution of greed and the increase of love in the mass of men. Let but love increase, — and the miracle will take place which was performed during the distribution of the five loaves. All will have enough to eat, and there will be left some. — *R.*]

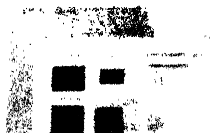
This activity demands first of all the cessation of the caste relation to the masses, which is contrary to love, and the cessation of their exploitation, and demands a direct relation with them, a change, a simplification of life, — it demands a life with them, with those masses whom we wish to serve.

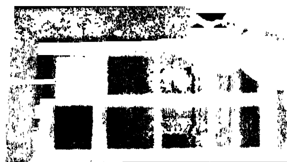
This activity presents itself to me like this: a man of the wealthy classes, who in the present calamitous year wants to do his share in the common calamity, first of all arrives in one of the localities which have suffered, and begins to live there, spending in Mamadýshi, Lukyánov, Efrémov Counties, in a famine village, those usual tens of thousands or hundreds of roubles, which he is in the habit of spending annually, and devoting his leisure, which in the city he used for amusements, to such an activity in favour of the starving people as will be according to his strength.

The mere fact that he will live there and spend what he usually spends will bring material assistance to the masses; and the fact that he will live amidst the masses, not even with any sense of self-sacrifice, but only without any selfish motives, will be of material aid to him and to the masses. It is evident that a man who has come to a famine locality for the purpose of being useful to the masses, will not limit himself to living for his pleasure alone amidst this starving population. I imagine such a person, man or woman, or a family with average means, let us say with one thousand roubles per year, as having settled in the famine district.

This person, or family, rents, or receives a dwelling from the proprietor, who is a friend, or chooses, or hires a







good hut: he has it papered, fixes the floors, provides himself with wood and supplies, buys himself a horse and fodder, and gets settled. All this means bread for the masses; but the relations of this family to the masses cannot be limited to this. Beggars with wallets will come to the kitchen. Alms must be given. The cook complains that too much bread is given out. It becomes necessary to refuse chunks, or to bake more loaves. More loaves are baked, and more people begin to come. From a family which is out of bread and has nothing to eat they have come to ask for some, and it becomes necessary to send some there. It turns out that the cook cannot manage it all, and that the oven is too small. It becomes necessary to hire a hut for the loaves, and to get another woman to do the baking. This costs money. There is no money. The person that has settled here has friends, or acquaintances, who know that he or she has gone to live in a famine district. He or she receives from them money which is to be used in assisting people. In the hired hut bread is distributed, but there come for it people who are not in absolute want of it, and they take the bread and sell it; — there begins a deception. To prevent the temptation of using the distributed bread for personal advantage, such people as come are given something to eat, instead of receiving bread. They prepare soup, beets, oat or starch broth, lentils, peas, — an eating-house is established.

[It seems to me that the eating-houses, places where those who come are fed, are naturally the form of assistance which will arise from the relations of the rich to the starving, and will be of the greatest use. This form more than any other calls forth the direct aid of him who brings assistance, more than anything else brings him in contact with the masses, less than any other is subject to misuse, and makes it possible with the least means to feed the greatest number of men.

In Dánkov and Epiphany Counties such eating-houses were opened in September. The people have named them "orphan homes," and, it seems, the name itself prevents any misuse of these establishments. An able-bodied peasant, who has the least chance of providing himself with food, will not himself go to these eating-houses to eat the orphans' food, for, so far as I have observed, he considers this a disgrace. Here is a letter which I have received from my friend, a member of the County Council, and a constant resident in the country, in relation to the activity of these orphan homes:

"Six orphan homes have been opened not more than ten days, and there already are two hundred people who are receiving food in them. The superintendent of the eating-houses is compelled, with the advice of the village elder, to admit eaters only after examination, — the number of the needy is so great. It turns out that the peasants do not feed by families, but that those who are in want themselves offer their candidates, who are nearly all of them old women and children. Thus, for example, the father of six children, in the village of Páshkovo, asked me to admit two of them, and then, two days later, brought a third child. The elder said, 'It gives one a special pleasure to see how the younger children have taken to the beet stew.' The same elder told me that sometimes the mothers themselves bring the children. 'They are lying, when they say that it is to give them courage, for they will look about and eat themselves.' As you hear these words of the elder, you understand that it is not a lie, and that it is not possible to invent such words. Has the famine really not yet begun? We, of course, know that the wolf is at the door; but the trouble is that the wolf breaks into so many families simultaneously that I am afraid we shall not have supplies enough. A calculation has shown that we use for each mouth one pound of bread and one pound of potatoes each day, and in addition

to this we need fuel and a number of trifles, onions, salt, beets, and so forth. We are most troubled by the fuel; it is the most expensive of all the materials. The peasants have arranged to haul by rotation, and thus bring in the supplies. The organization demands a good administrator, and the finding of the supplies is a troublesome matter; but the orphan homes themselves need no supervision in the disbursement of the supplies: the hostess herself has been so much accustomed all her life to look after small matters, and the guests themselves watch the business of their eating-house so much, that the least neglect would immediately become known and then would be removed of its own accord. I have had two new cellars dug, and three hundred chétverts of potatoes have already been put into them, but this is too little, as the need grows from day to day. It seems that the aid has struck the nail on the head. A man has been placed in charge of six eating-houses, but it is time to widen the circle of the activity of the eating-houses, and the time has not yet passed.

"I feel how joyous the work will be in the eating-houses; one does feel pleasure when watering plants in a drought: what joy, then, must it be every day to feed the starving little children!"

I think that this form is convenient and possible, but I repeat that this form does not exclude other forms. The persons who live in the villages will have occasion to aid with money, and with grain, and with flour, and with bread, and with a horse, and simply with food.

All that is necessary is that there should be men. But these men exist, they surely do. I have visited four counties, and in each there are already men who are ready for this activity, and who in some counties have already begun it. — *R.*]

However sure I am in advance, having learned this from bitter experience, that my idea will be misinterpreted, that people will purposely make it appear that

they do not understand it, and will take one part and will say that in it lies the whole idea, I will none the less express my idea in full, without curtailing it, and without giving it in a softened form, so as to become unrecognizable, but in its full significance, and with the greatest clearness of expression that I am able to give to it.

My idea is this, that what saves men from calamities of every kind, among them famine, is nothing but love. But love is never limited to words, — it is always expressed in acts.

Now the acts of love in relation to the starving consist in giving one's own piece of bread to the hungry, as this was said, not even by Christ, but by his predecessor John, that is, it consists in sacrifice.

And so I think that the greater the sacrifice, the more love will there be, and the more fruitful will the acts be, — the more will people profit by it. And so I think that the best and most fruitful thing that can be done by those who understand the necessity of changing their lives now, in order to assist the needy, consists in settling now, in the present year, immediately, amidst the starving, living with them, eating with them, sleeping with them, dividing with them.

Although I am used to the misinterpretation of my ideas, it none the less pains me to think that this idea, too, will be misinterpreted, and that it will be deprived of the value which it might have, and so I beg leave to say just now how I understand what I have spoken of above.

I know in advance that people will say, "Tolstóy asserts that every person who wants to assist the starving ought to go at once and settle in a cold hut, live with lice, eat bread with orache, and die in two months or two weeks, and that everybody who does not do so offers no assistance."

I do not say so.

I say that to do so, to live and die with those who will die in two months or two weeks, would be very nice and

beautiful, — just as beautiful as Damien's life and death among the lepers. But I do not say that everybody should and could do so, and that he who does not do so is doing nothing. I say that the nearer a man will act like that, the better it will be for him and for others, and that every person who will come to the starving in the villages, and so will in some measure approach the ideal, will be doing well.

There are two limits: one is to give one's life for one's friends; the other is, to live without changing the conditions of one's life. All men find themselves between these two limits: some are on the level with Christ's disciples, who left everything and followed Him; the others are on a level with the rich young man, who immediately turned around and went away when he was told of the change of life.

Between these two limits are found all kinds of Zacchæuses, who have only partially changed their lives. But, in order to be a Zacchæus, it is necessary all the time to strive after the first limit.

All men who understand that the means for helping the present famine-stricken people consists in the removal of the partition which separates us from the masses, and who in consequence of this have changed their life, will inevitably, according to their moral and physical forces, take up their positions between these two limits.

Some will settle in a village and will arrange their lives in a way more or less close to the first manner of life: they will live and eat with the starving, departing from this according to their weakness; others will live and eat separately, but will manage kitchens and eating-houses, will serve the hungry at their dinner, will furnish them with food, and will give food to be taken home for the sick and the children; others again will only superintend the eating-houses, and will visit and watch the eating-houses; others — I can imagine — will live in a hungry

village, spending their incomes there and alleviating as much of the need as they hear of; others, living in the city, where the most varied moral necessities may retain them, will change their mode of life by curtailing their own expenses and aiding those who will live in the villages to widen their activity.

Such, I imagine, will be the activity of the men who have come to understand their sin of separation from the masses and who wish to repent of it and to redeem it in the present year of wretchedness, which calls for redemption.

There can be none but a living help for men.

Such is the law. To wish to do good without sacrifice is the same as wishing to move a body without a loss of force.

The external governmental activity in behalf of the famine-stricken is an activity without sacrifice, hence its lack of success until the present, and, in my opinion and in the opinion of the actors themselves, the impossibility of success, to say nothing of the fact that the obstacles to this activity are found, as we have seen, in the impossibility of determining the degree of the people's need, the weakening of the energy of the people themselves, and the impossibility of such a distribution that the aid shall reach the most needy.

The inconvenience of this activity consists in this, that people look upon the government aid as upon their lawful possession, to which they have a right, as upon an increase of income, and the jealousy of acquisition flames up when they receive the aid. All those who receive assistance see only persons who distribute money which is not their own, and who receive salaries for doing so, and such a distribution only develops in them greed for the greatest acquisition.

If the people in the famine district — all kinds of people, those who stand on the lowest round of poverty,

and the rich men who live in the county seats, and all people between the two,—proprietors, both large and small, officials, merchants, innkeepers, millers, well-to-do and average peasants—see, as they see now, all people busy and very eagerly busy acquiring and increasing their means of subsistence,—proprietors and merchants who deal in high-priced corn, wood, potato-tops, who make use of everything in order to increase their incomes, and who side by side with it continue their usual round of life, with their hunts, city visits, and celebrations, they are, every one of them, infected by the same egotistical life and try out of everything they can, among the rest out of the assistance offered to men, to get hold of as much as possible and to give as little aid as possible.

The egotistical life and the chase after advantages is infectious. But just as infectious, and even more so, is the unegotistical activity of love,—the activity of sacrifice.

Every centre of men who live only in order to aid the starving and who have changed their lives for this purpose will be the centre of an infection of goodness. Looking at these people, the rich man who lives in the county seat, and the proprietor, and the merchant, will give more, and so, above all, will the average man, of whom there are thousands, and who will cut off a larger slice for Christ's sake. There are millions of these people, and millions of the roubles of a rich man will do less than an ever so small diminution of greed and an increase of love in men. And so soon as there shall be an infection of sacrifice, there will happen what was accomplished at the distribution of the five loaves.

All will have enough to eat, and there will be left some.

But, in order that this may happen, that love may make its appearance, it is indispensable that the activity should not arise from the desire, while remaining in our former

relations to the masses, to maintain in them the working force which we need, but from the consciousness of guilt toward the masses, of the impression exerted against them, and of the separation from them, — from repentance and humility.

Not on the proud consciousness of our indispensableness to the masses, but on humility can grow up the activity which can save the masses.

1892.

ARTICLES AND REPORTS ON THE FAMINE

1891–1893

ARTICLES AND REPORTS ON THE FAMINE

THE TERRIBLE QUESTION

Is there enough corn in Russia to feed all until the next harvest? Some say there is, and others say that there is not, but nobody knows this of a certainty. But this ought to be known, and known for certain, now, before the beginning of winter, — it is just as necessary as it is necessary for men to know, when they set out on a voyage, whether there is enough fresh water and food on the boat.

It is terrible to think of what will happen to the crew and the passengers of the boat, when it turns out in the middle of the ocean that all the supplies are used up. Still more terrible is it to think of what will happen to us, if we are to believe those who assert that we shall have enough corn for all the starving, and it turns out in the spring that those who asserted so were mistaken.

It is terrible to think of the consequences of such an error. The consequences of this error will simply be dreadful: the death of starving millions and the worst of all calamities, — the bestialization and maddening of men. It is all very well to inform the St. Petersburgians by the firing of cannon alone that the water is rising, because it is impossible to do anything else. Nobody

knows, nor can know, the extent of the water's rise, — whether it will stop at what it was last year, or whether it will reach the high-water mark of the year 1824, or will rise even higher.

The famine of the present year, besides being an incomparably greater calamity than an inundation, is incomparably more universal (it threatens all of Russia), — it is a calamity, the degree of which not only can and must be foreseen, but can and must be foreseen and prevented.

"Oh, come now! There will be enough corn in Russia, more than enough of all kinds of grain for everybody," say and write some people, and others, who love peace, are inclined to believe this. But it is impossible to believe what is said at haphazard, as a result of guesses in respect to a subject of such terrible importance.

If it is said that in a bathhouse of doubtful security, to which people go once a week, on Saturday, the beams will do for awhile yet and that it is not necessary to put in others, we may risk it and leave the bathhouse without any alterations; but when it is said boldly of a doubtful ceiling in a theatre, where thousands sit every evening, that there is a possibility that it will not cave in to-night, it is impossible to believe and to be calm. The menacing danger is too great. But the danger which is threatening Russia, when it is going to be impossible to get the bread necessary for the support of men at any price, this danger is so terrible that the imagination refuses to present to itself what would happen if it were really so; and so not only must we not be satisfied with bold, soothing assertions that there will be enough corn in Russia, but it would even be senseless and criminal to be so.

But does such a danger exist? Is there any probability that there will not be enough corn? The following considerations may serve as answers to this question. In the first place, the famine district comprises one-third of Russia, that very third which has always fed a part

of the other two-thirds. Kalúga, Tver, Moscow, all the non-black soil and northern Governments, even the non-black soil counties of those Governments which have not suffered from the famine, never subsist on their own corn, but always buy it from those who now must themselves subsist on corn which is got elsewhere.

For this reason, if we count, say, ten puds to each person, well, let us say, of only twenty millions (when they figure them as high as forty millions) of inhabitants of the starving counties, — two hundred million puds of corn which are needed, — this does not by a good deal represent the amount of the corn necessary for feeding Russia. To this number must be added everything which is needed for those who in former years subsisted on the corn of the famine-stricken localities, which will very likely give another such figure.

The failure of the crops in the most fruitful localities effects something similar to what takes place in the shifting of a lever's point of support: not only is the force of the shorter end diminished, but the force of the longer end is increased so many times.

One-third of Russia is in the grasp of the failure of crops, — the most fruitful part, which has been feeding the other two-thirds, and so it is very likely that there will not be enough corn to go around.

This is one consideration. The second consideration is this, that the neighbouring countries are affected by a similar failure of crops and that, therefore, a great quantity of corn has already been exported and now continues to be exported; at least this is true of wheat.

The third consideration is this, that, quite contrary to what happened in the famine year, 1840, there are, and there can be, in this year no stores of old corn.

With Russia happened something similar to what happened according to the Bible story in Egypt, only with this difference, that in Russia there was no predicting

Joseph, and there were no executive persons like Joseph; but there have been threshing-machines, railways, banks, and a great demand for money on the part of the Governments and of private individuals. In all the preceding years, — more than seven preceding years, — there was much corn, the prices were low, but the need of money grew and grew, as it regularly grows among us, and the convenience of selling, the threshing-machines, the railways, and the purchasing agents have encouraged selling and have been the cause of corn's being all sold out in the fall. If in the last years, when the corn fell particularly in price, a few sellers have kept back some corn, waiting for better prices, this holding back was such a hard matter that the moment the prices rose in the spring of the present year and reached as high as fifty to sixty kopeks per pud, the corn was all sold out, and nothing was left of the supplies of the preceding years. In the year 1840 it was not only the landed proprietors and the merchants who had supplies left, but everywhere the peasants had stores of old corn, from three to five years old. Now this custom has become obsolete, and nowhere can anything like it be found. In this does the third consideration consist as to the insufficiency of the corn-supply for the present year.

But there is something more than a mere probability: there are signs, — quite definite ones at that, — that this want exists.

One of such signs is the phenomenon, which is daily repeated with ever growing frequency, that there is no corn for sale in the depths of the famine districts; so, for example, in Dánkov County, where I now am, there is no rye to be had at any price. The peasants cannot find any meal. Yesterday I saw two peasants of Dánkov County, who have travelled all around the district with which they are familiar, in a radius of twenty versts, visiting all the mills and stores, in order to buy for money two puds of

meal, but they were unable to procure it. One of them obtained it after urgent prayers from a storehouse of another county; the other borrowed it.

This phenomenon is not exclusive, but one which is constantly and everywhere repeated. The millers come to beg you for Christ's sake to let them have meal from the storehouse of the County Council, because they have no meal, and because they cannot get it anywhere. It is possible to purchase it from the merchants, in the cities, near the railways, but only in large quantities, at least half a car-load or a car-load at a time; but there is no way of getting it at retail. The large merchants, those who have a supply, do not sell at all, but are waiting; the small merchants, the dealers, buy it up and sell it out again at an insignificant profit to the large purchasers. A small trade is carried on only in the fairs, during fair time, and if the purchaser is too late he can get none there, either. This sign, it seems to me, shows quite clearly that there is not as much corn to be had as is needed. This is also in part shown by the prices, although in the present year there have so far been causes which do not permit the prices to be a correct indication of a correspondence between demand and supply. The prices are lower than they ought to be, and they are artificially kept at this height, in the first place, by the prohibition against exporting the corn; in the second place, by the activity of the County Councils, by the sale of rye and meal at reduced prices (I speak of the price of rye, assuming that the prices of the other foodstuffs, of bran, potatoes, millet, oats, more or less correspond to the price of rye).

The prohibition against exporting has confused the prices, that is, has had this effect, that the prices can no longer be a correct indication of the amount of the supply of the article. Just as the height of the water's rise in the dammed river cannot be an indication of its real level,

so the present price of rye cannot correctly indicate the relation of demand to supply. The prohibition against exporting other grain has had the same effect. The prices now existing are not well-established prices, and are in any case only temporarily lowered prices in consequence of the prohibition against exporting. This is one cause why the prices are lower than what they ought to be. Another cause is the activity of the County Councils.

The County Councils have everywhere bought up a small portion, rarely more than one-fourth, of the corn which, according to their own calculation, they need for supplying all the food, and they sell the corn bought up by them at a lower price. This activity of the County Councils knocks down the price, for, if there did not exist this sale from the County Council storehouses, the sale would take place by private sellers, who, in accordance with the increased demand, would raise the prices. The present price, I think, is much lower than what it would be if we did not have the activity of the County Councils. And this price will at once very rapidly rise as soon as the County Councils have to buy up the other three-fourths of the corn needed by them.

We could say that the price would not rise if the County Councils should now buy up all the necessary amount, and rye remained for sale at this price. But judging from what is now the case, there is no probability of its being so. Judging from what is now the case, that is, when the price is one rouble seventy kopeks, while the County Councils have not bought up even one-fourth of the corn needed, and while rye is not supplied everywhere or at retail, there is, on the contrary, a probability that when the County Councils shall have purchased all the necessary amount, the price will suddenly rise to such a height that it will be shown that there is not enough corn in Russia. The price has in our locality already reached such a height as it has never reached before,

being as much as one rouble seventy kopeks, and it continues to rise regularly.

All these signs indicate that there is a great probability that Russia has not the necessary amount of corn within its boundaries. But besides these signs, there is also another phenomenon which ought to cause us to take all the measures which are in our power for the prevention of the calamity that is menacing us. This phenomenon is the panic which has taken possession of society, that is, the indefinite dim fear of the expected calamity,— a fear by which people are infected from one another, a fear which deprives people of the ability to act in accordance with reason. This panic is expressed in the prohibition against exporting, at first the rye, and later other kinds of grain, from which for some reason wheat is excluded, and in the measures taken, on the one hand, in assigning large sums of money for the starving, and, on the other, in the collection of the taxes by the local powers from those who can pay, as though the extraction of the money from the village is not a direct intensification of the want in the village. (The poor man's planting is mortgaged to the well-to-do peasant; he would be willing to wait, but the taxes are exacted from him, and so he calls on the poor man and ruins him.)

This panic is also startlingly noticeable in the disagreements which are bursting forth among the various local departments. There is repeated what always happens during a panic fear,—some pull in one direction, others in another.

This panic is expressed in the mood and the activity of the masses. I shall quote one example: the masses are all tending toward outside earnings.

In this present year the masses travel to St. Petersburg, to Moscow, to find a living there. At a time when all the work has stopped for the winter, when the living expenses are three times as dear as usual and every

master dismisses as many superfluous men as he can, at a time when there is everywhere a mass of working men out of work, — men who have never had anything to do in the cities go there to find work. Is it not obvious to anybody that under such conditions there is more chance for the owner of a lottery ticket to win twenty thousand, than for a peasant who has arrived in Moscow from the country to find a place, and that the whole journey, no matter how inexpensive, with the expenses connected with it, and here and there with a spree, is only an additional burden, which will lie heavy on the starving? One would think that this is obvious, — and yet all of them go to the city and back again, and again to the city. Is not this a symptom of the complete madness, which takes possession of the crowd during every panic?

All these symptoms and, above all else, the phenomenon of the panic, are very significant, and so we cannot help but be afraid of them. We cannot say, as people generally say of an enemy, before they have tried their strength with him, "We shall undo him with our caps." The enemy, the terrible enemy, is standing here, before us, and it cannot be said that we are not afraid of him, because we know that he exists and, more still, we know that we are afraid of him.

And if we are afraid of him, we must first of all find out his strength. We cannot remain in the ignorance in which we now are.

Let us assume that Russian society, those men who live outside the pale of the starving localities, will understand their material and spiritual solidarity with the suffering masses, and will make true, serious sacrifices for the purpose of aiding the needy. Let us assume that the activity of those people who now live amidst the famine-stricken, working for them to the best of their ability, will continue doing so until the end, and that the number

of these men will be increased; let us assume that the masses themselves are not losing courage and will struggle against want even as they are struggling now, with all positive and negative means, that is, by controlling themselves and increasing their energy and their inventiveness for finding the necessary means for existence, — let us assume that all this has been done and is being done a month, two, three, six months, and suddenly the price rises and continues to rise, as it has risen from forty-five kopeks to one rouble seventy kopeks, by degrees from one fair to another, and in a few weeks reaches as high as two and three roubles per pud, and it turns out that there is no corn, and that all the sacrifices made by those who have given money and by those who have lived and worked among the needy were a useless waste of means and of forces, and, above all else, that the whole energy of the masses is lost in vain, and no matter how much they, that is, a part of them, may have struggled, they none the less had to starve, while we ought to have known and prevented it all.

We cannot, we cannot, we must not remain in such an uncertainty; we, the educated and learned men, must not remain in this uncertainty. A peasant whom I saw yesterday did nearly everything which he could. He provided himself with money and went out to find some meal. He went to see Mikhaíl Vanílevich; he went to the mill; he went to Chernáva — there is nowhere any meal. Having visited all the places where there might have been some meal, he knows that he has done everything in his power, and if after that he could nowhere obtain any meal and the famine overcame him and his family, he would know that he has done everything in his power, and his conscience would be at peace.

But if in our case it turns out that there is not enough corn and that our labours, too, will perish, and, perhaps, we together with the masses, our conscience will not be

at peace. We might have found out how much corn we should need, and we might have provided ourselves with it.

If our education and learning is of any avail to us, what greater good can it do than avert such a universal calamity as is the present one?

To figure out how much corn is needed for the support of those who have none in this present year, and how much corn there is in Russia, and if there is not enough of it to go around, to order the necessary corn from abroad, — all that is our direct duty, which is as natural as what the peasant did yesterday, when he travelled in a district for twenty versts around. And our conscience will be at peace only when we shall have visited all the surrounding country and shall have done everything we can. For him the surrounding country is Dánkov, Klekótki, for us it is India, America, Australia. We not only know that these countries exist, but are also in friendly intercourse with their inhabitants.

And how is what we need and what corn we have to be figured out? Is this really so difficult? We, who know how to figure out how many different kinds of bugs there are in the world, how many microbes there are in a given area, how many millions of versts it is to the stars, and how many pounds of iron and of oxygen there are in each star, — shall we not be able to figure out how much people must eat in order not to starve, and how much has been harvested by these men, by whose aid we have always found our sustenance? We, who with such a luxury of details have up to the present been collecting such a mass of, so far as I know, absolutely useless statistical data concerning the rate relation between births and marriages, deaths, and so forth, shall we suddenly be unable to collect the actually necessary information, which is needed most urgently? This is impossible.

It is possible to collect this information, not approxi-

mate, guesswork information, like that precise information we get concerning the population by a one day's registration.

We need the information as to how much corn above the amount usually used for the support of all the Russians will be needed for the inhabitants of the famine districts, and how much corn there is in Russia. And we do not want approximate, wholesale, guesswork answers; the matter is too important to be done at haphazard, like building an arch, for which we do not know whether we have stone enough to close it.

This information may be obtained by the government and by the County Councils, wherever they exist; still more correctly it may be obtained by a private society, formed for the purpose. There does not exist any county in which could not be found, not merely one, but several men able and glad to help in this matter. This matter does not present itself to me as difficult. In a week an active man can without much labour travel over one-fourth or one-fifth of a county, especially if he lives in it, and within a possible error of ten or fifteen per cent. define the amount of corn needed for support, and the amount of corn for sale, above what is needed. I, at least, undertake personally to furnish such information in a week's time for one-fourth of the county in which I live. The same, I am told, can be done by the majority of those who live in the villages and with whom I have spoken about the matter. I assume that it is possible and not difficult to organize a central place, where the information may be collected and grouped, and which may send its members for this purpose to places where no volunteers have appeared. There may be mistakes; there may be concealments by the owners of corn; the moving of corn freight may produce mistakes; but the errors of the calculation, I think, will be small, and the information received in this manner would be suffi-

ciently exact to answer the main, troublesome question which, if not expressed, is felt by all, whether there is sufficient corn in Russia, or not.

If, let us say, it should appear that in the present year, after the deduction of what is generally used by the army and for the distilleries, the surplus of corn, above what is needed for the support of the nation, is as much as one hundred or fifty millions of puds, assuming that part of these one hundred millions may be held back by the sellers, part may perish, may be burned, part may form a mistake of calculation, we could peacefully and with assurance continue to live and to work. If there should not be any surplus at all and it should appear that there is in Russia as much corn as is needed, the situation would be doubtful and dangerous, but still it would be possible, without ordering any corn from abroad and only by lessening the use of the corn, as, for example, for the distilleries, and by working substitutes into foodstuffs, to continue to live and to work. But if it should appear that there is a deficit of one hundred or even fifty millions of puds of corn, the situation would be terrible. What would happen would be what happens when a fire breaks out and envelops a building. If we found it out now, it would be as when a fire breaks out and there is still time to put it out. If we found it out when the last ten thousand puds were being used up, it would be as when a fire has already enveloped the whole building and little hope is left of getting out of it alive.

If we should now learn that there is a deficit of corn, be it fifty, or one hundred, or two hundred millions of puds of corn, — all this would not be terrible. We should buy this corn now in America and should manage to settle for it by means of state, public, or national funds.

People who work ought to know that their work has a meaning and does not pass in vain.

Without this consciousness the hands will remain idle. And in order to know it, for the work with which the great majority of the Russians are now occupied, we must know now, at once, in two or three weeks, whether we have enough corn for the present year, and if not, where we can get it and what we need.

Byegichévka, November 1, 1891.

ON THE METHODS OF AIDING THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED FROM THE FAILURE OF CROPS

THE aid to the people who have suffered from the failure of crops may have two purposes, — that of supporting the peasant agriculture and of freeing people from the danger of falling sick and even dying as the result of insufficient and unwholesome food.

Is this aim attained by the aid which is now offered in the shape of the distribution of from twenty to thirty pounds of flour per month to every mouth, counting in the labourers, or not? I think it is not. And I think so from the following considerations: All peasant families of the whole of agricultural Russia may be classified according to three types: (1) a wealthy farm, from eight to twelve souls, an average of ten to each family; from three to five labourers, an average of four. From three to five horses, an average of four. And from three to nine desyatínas of land, an average of six. Such a peasant is a rich man. Such a peasant not only supports his whole family, but frequently hires one or two labourers, buys up land from poor peasants, and lends them corn and seeds. All this may be done under conditions which are disadvantageous to the poor peasants, but the result is this, that where there are in the country ten per cent. of such rich people the land does not lie idle, and in case of need the poor man has still a means for providing himself with corn, seeds, and even money.

The second type is the average peasant, who with great difficulty makes both ends meet with his two lots and with

one or two labourers and one or two horses. This farm lives almost on its own corn. What is lacking is earned by the member of the family who lives apart.

The third type is a poor man with a family of from three to five souls, with one labourer, frequently without a horse. He never has enough of his own bread; he must every year invent means for getting out of trouble and is always within a hair's breadth of beggary, and at the least mishap goes a-begging.

The aid which is offered in the form of flour to the population of the famine places is distributed according to the existing property lists of the peasant families. According to these lists it is calculated how much aid each is to receive; and this aid is offered only to the poorest, that is, to the families of the third type.

No aid is proposed to the farms of the first type, — to the rich and the average peasant, who have yet a few chétverts of oats left, two horses, a cow, some sheep. But if we enter into the condition, not only of the average, but even of the rich peasant, we cannot help but see that for the support of the peasant agriculture these farmers need the greatest aid.

Let us assume that a rich peasant has some rye left; he has twenty or more chétverts of oats, five horses, two cows, and eighteen sheep, and so no aid is provided for him, because he still has all these things. But figure up his income and his expenditures, and you will see that he is in just as much need as the poor peasant. To support his establishment with the rented land, he has to sow about ten chétverts. The fact that he will have left forty, fifty, or sixty roubles' worth of corn is nothing in comparison with what he needs for his family of twelve souls. For his twelve souls he needs fifteen puds at one rouble fifty kopeks — twenty-two roubles fifty kopeks per month, 225 roubles for ten months. He needs, besides, forty, fifty, seventy roubles with which to pay the

rental for his land, and he needs money for his taxes. The members of his family, who are hired out, receive this year less money than before, on account of the higher price of corn, or are discharged altogether. He needs about 350 roubles, but he will not get together two hundred roubles, and so there is but one thing left for him to do, and that is, not to hire any land, to sell the seed-oats, to sell some of his horses, for which he cannot get any decent price, that is, to descend to the level of an average peasant, or even lower, because the family of the average peasant is smaller.

But even the average peasant, so long as he has some oats and one or two horses left, does not receive any aid, or he receives so little that he must sell his land to the exclusive rich men, eat up his seed-oats, and sell his horse for food. Thus, with such a distribution of the aid as now exists, the rich peasant must inevitably descend to the level of the average peasant, and the average peasant to that of the poor peasant. From the conditions of the present year, nearly all must descend to this level.

The distribution of flour, failing to attain the end of supporting the peasant agriculture, also fails to attain the second end, — the prevention of famine diseases. The distribution of flour according to souls does not attain this from the following causes:

In the first place, because with such a distribution of flour it is always possible for the recipient to succumb to temptation and to spend in drinks what he has received, a thing which, though infrequently, has happened in some cases; in the second place, because, falling into the hands of the poor, this aid saves them from famine only in case the family has some other means of its own. The maximum portion is thirty pounds to each man. And if thirty pounds of flour, with potatoes, and some admixture in the flour for the baking of bread, may support a man for the period of a month, these thirty pounds,

in connection with complete poverty, when there is no money with which to buy orache to mix in with the bread, are eaten up in the form of pure bread in the period of from fifteen to twenty days, and the people, remaining in a starving condition for ten days, may grow sick or even die from lack of food. In the third place, the distribution of flour to poor families, even such as still have means of their own, does not attain the end of preventing famine diseases, because in a family, in which the strong people easily endure poor food, the feeble, the old, and the young grow sick from insufficient and unwholesome food.

In all localities which are affected by the failure of crops, all — the well-to-do and the poor families alike — eat poor bread which is made with orache. (Strange to say, now the poorest, in the majority of cases, in receiving bread from the County Councils, eat pure bread, while in the wealthy families nearly all eat it with orache, with the abominable immature orache of the present year.)[1]

And it constantly happens that the strong members of a rich family endure the orache bread, while the feeble, the old, the sick, simply run down from its effects and die.

Thus, there arrives a sick woman from a wealthy farm, carrying in her hands a chunk of black orache flat cake, which forms her chief food, and begging to be admitted to the kitchen, for no other reason than that she is sick, and that, too, only for the period of her sickness.

Another example: I go to a peasant who receives no aid and is considered rich. There are only two of them,

[1] The use of orache in the present year as food can be explained only by tradition, by the fact that people used to eat it before, — and there is a proverb, which says, "Not worse than porridge is bread with orache," — and that it grew up in the rye-field and was threshed out with the rye. It seems to me that if there existed no tradition, and if it did not grow in the rye-field, it is more likely that oat straw or filings would be mixed in with the bread than this injurious substance. And yet it is everywhere mixed in with the bread. — *Author's Note.*

he and his wife, and they have no children. I find them at dinner: potato broth and orache bread. In the fermenting-trough is fresh bread, with a still greater admixture of orache. Husband and wife are cheerful and happy; but on the oven there is an old woman, who is sick from the orache bread, and she says that it is better to eat but once a day, provided one has good bread, for it is impossible to stomach this.

Or a third example: there comes a woman from a wealthy farm, begging to have her thirteen-year-old daughter admitted to the public kitchen, because she is not fed at home. This daughter was born out of wedlock, and so she is not loved and does not receive enough to eat. There are many such examples, and so the distribution of flour as an aid does not secure the old, the feeble, and the disliked members of the family against diseases and starvation, in consequence of insufficient and unwholesome food.

However painful it may be to say so, the activity of the members of the County Council, which consists in the distribution of corn, in spite of the remarkable energy and even self-sacrifice of the majority of them, does not attain either the end of supporting the peasant agriculture, or of preventing the possibility of famine diseases.

But if what is being done now is not good, what is good? What ought to be done?

According to my opinion two things are needed: for the counteraction to complete annihilation, if not for the support of the peasant agriculture, we need to provide work for the whole population capable of working, and to establish free kitchens for the young, the old, the feeble, and the sick in all the villages of the famine-stricken localities.

The provision for labour must be such that this labour shall be accessible, familiar, and habitual to the population, and not such as the people have never busied them-

selves with or have not even seen, or such that the members of the families who formerly did not go away will now have to leave their home, which is for them frequently impossible for domestic and other reasons (such as the lack of clothing). The work must be such that, with the exception of all the work outside their houses, to which all those workers who are accustomed to it and able to go out to earn money will go, the home work may be performed by the rest of the population of the famine-stricken localities, — men, women, able-bodied old men, and half-grown children.

The calamity of this year consists not only in the lack of corn, but also in a not lesser lack of earnings, and simply of work, — in the enforced idleness of several millions of the population. If the corn needed for the support of the population is on hand, that is, can be transported to a place where it is wanted for a reasonable price, the famine-stricken people may be able to work for this corn, provided they have the possibility of working, the material for work, and a market for it. But if they do not have this possibility, hundreds of millions will irretrievably be lost in the distribution of aids, but the calamity will none the less not be removed. But the question is not merely one of material loss: the idleness of the whole population which receives free food has a terrible, corrupting effect.

Work outside their houses may be variously arranged, for the winter, and, still more, for the summer, and may God grant that this kind of work may at once be established and be of the widest possible dimensions. But, besides these larger labours outside the house, the affording the people a chance, without leaving their homes and their customary conditions, to work at their customary work, even though at a very low price, is a matter of imperative necessity and enormous importance.

In the villages of the localities where there was a failure

of crops there has been no crop of hemp or of flax; the sheep are nearly all sold, and the women have no weaving and no spinning to do. The women, old and young, and the girls, who are usually busy, are sitting without any work. More than this: the peasants, remaining at home and having no money with which to buy bast, also sit without their customary winter work, — the weaving of bast shoes. The children, too, loaf about without work, because the schools are for the most part closed. The people, having before themselves only the oppressive conceptions of the ever-increasing need, and deprived of the usual and more than ever indispensable means for diversion and oblivion, — of work, — are sitting for days at a time with folded hands, discussing all kinds of rumours and suppositions in regard to the aid which is being offered or which will be offered, and chiefly in regard to their need. "They feel lonesome and tired and so are ailing more than ever," is what a clever old man said to me.

To say nothing of the economic significance of work for the present year, its moral significance is enormous. Work, any kind of work which could keep busy all the people who are idle this year, forms a most imperative necessity.

So long as these extensive labours have not yet been established (labours for which there have been all kinds of extremely clever projects, which, as we hear, are being established now, and which will be immensely useful, if only in their establishment the habits and comforts of the population will be taken into consideration), if only in all the famine-stricken villages all the remaining people might be given a chance to work at their customary work, — the men, say, to weave their bast shoes, if nothing more, and the women to spin and weave, — and they are given a chance to sell everything which is produced by this labour, this would be, if not a support of the peasant agriculture, at least a check in its ruin. If it be admitted

that their linen can be disposed of at as little as eight kopeks per arshín (and it can be disposed of in enormous quantities), and if the bast shoes, which can be kept for years, are bought up at ten kopeks per pair, the earnings of every man will be at the lowest five kopeks, that is, one rouble fifty kopeks per month. If we, with this, assume that in every family there are no more than one-fourth of their members who cannot work, it will turn out that for each person in a family there will be earned 450¼ kopeks, that is, one rouble twelve kopeks; that is, considerably more than what now, with so much effort and so many discussions and quarrels, provoking universal indignation, is given by the County Council.

Such would be the calculation, if they worked at the cheapest and unquestionably the most accessible work, which is best known by the country population.

Greater means would be obtained than what is now received from the free or loan distribution, there would not be that insoluble difficulty of the distribution, and, above all else, of the dissatisfaction which is caused by this distribution.

In order to attain this, it would be necessary merely to spend insignificant sums for the purchase of material for work, — flax and bast, — and to secure the disposition of these products.

Many people, though still to a very small extent, are now busying themselves with the arrangement of such work, — providing weaving material for the women and a sale for their woven products. We, too, have begun this matter, but so far have not received the flax, wool, and bast which we have ordered. Our proposition to the peasants to busy themselves with work — with the production of linen and of bast shoes for sale — has everywhere been met with delight. "If we could but earn three kopeks a day, we should be doing better than sitting without work," we were told.

It is self-evident that all this refers only to the five winter months; in the remaining four summer months, up to the new crop, the work could be much more productive.

To attain the end, if not of supporting the peasant agriculture, at least of checking its fall, there is, in my opinion, but one means, — the arrangement of work.

But to attain the second end, — to save men from falling sick in consequence of bad food and an insufficiency of it, the only unquestionable means is the establishment in every village of a free kitchen, in which any man who is hungry may get enough to eat.

The establishment of such eating-houses was begun by us more than a month ago, and has so far been conducted with a success which surpasses our expectations. The eating-houses were arranged as follows:

During my journey to Epiphany County, in the end of September, I met my old friend, I. I. Raévski, to whom I communicated my intention of establishing eating-houses in the famine localities. He invited me to settle with him and, without rejecting any other form of aid, not only approved of my plan of establishing eating-houses, but even undertook to aid me in this matter and, with his characteristic love for the people, and determination and simplicity of manner, immediately, even before our coming down to his place, began this matter and opened six such eating-houses about him. The method which he employed consisted in this, that in the poorest villages he proposed to the widows or the poorest inhabitants to feed those who would come to them, and for this purpose distributed to them the necessary provisions. The elder, with others empowered to do so, made lists of the children and the old men who were to receive food in the eating-houses, and the eating-houses were opened. These, though established by none other than the elders themselves and one of Raévski's clerks, went very well and lasted about a month. But at the time of our moving to his place, which

coincided with the first distribution of aid from the government, five eating-houses were closed, because the people who used to go there were beginning to get their monthly allowance, and so did not seem to need the double assistance. Very soon, however, in spite of the distribution of aid, the need increased to such an extent that the necessity was felt for the opening of the closed eating-houses and the establishment of new ones. During the four weeks which we passed here we opened thirty eating-houses. At first we opened them in accordance with information collected by us as regards the most necessitous villages, but now for more than a week we have on all sides been requested to open new eating-houses, which request we are no longer able to satisfy.

The business of opening eating-houses consists in the following, — at least, we have acted in this way: Having heard of a village in particular need, we arrive there, go to the elder, and, declaring our intention, invite some of the older men and ask them about the property conditions of the farms from one end of the village to the other. The elder, his wife, the old men, and a few others, who have come to the hut from curiosity, describe to us the condition of the farms.

"Well, beginning at the left: Maksím Aptókhin. What about him?"

"He is in bad shape; he has children; there are seven, all told. He has not had any corn for a long time. That's why the old woman and a boy ought to go."

We note down: From Maksím Aptókhin — two. Next — Fédor Abrámov.

"They are in bad shape, too. Still, they manage to feed themselves."

But the elder's wife chimes in, saying that he, too, is in bad shape, and that we ought to take a boy. Next comes an old man, a soldier of the time of Nicholas.

"He is just starving."

Demyán Saprónov.

"They manage to live."

And thus the whole village is discussed. We can see with what justice and with what absence of class feeling the peasants decide on those who are in need from the circumstance that, in spite of the fact that many peasants were not admitted in the first village, in Tatíshchevo, Rykhótsk Township, where we opened an eating-house, the peasants without the least hesitation named the pope's widow with her children and the sexton's wife among the number of the unquestionably poor who ought to be accepted in the eating-house. Thus all the farms passed in review are, according to the indications of the elder and the neighbours, generally divided into three classes: into those who are unquestionably in bad shape, of whom some persons ought to go to the eating-house, those who are unquestionably all right,—those who can take care of themselves,—and those about whom there is some doubt. This doubt is generally settled by the number of men who attend the eating-house. It is hard for a peasant to feed more than forty, and so, if the number attending the eating-house is less than forty, the doubtful ones are accepted, and if more, it becomes necessary to refuse them. Generally a few persons, who unquestionably ought to be fed in the eating-houses, are left out, and in proportion as this is brought to our notice, changes and additions are made. But if in a village there turns up a very large number of doubtfully needy persons, a second, and sometimes a third, eating-house is opened there.

In general, both in our eating-houses, and in those of our neighbour, Mrs. N. F., who is carrying on the matter independently of us, the number of people fed in an eating-house always forms one-third of all persons in the village.

There are very many volunteers, in nearly all the farms, who are willing to keep the eating-house, that is, to bake the bread, to cook the meals, and to serve the eaters, for the right to receive their food and fuel gratis. All

people are to such an extent anxious to keep these eating-houses that in the first two villages where we opened eating-houses, the elders, both of them rich peasants, proposed to open the eating-houses in their huts; but since the keeper of the eating-house is completely provided with food and fuel, we generally choose the very poorest, so long as they are in the centre of the village, and can easily be reached from both ends. We pay no attention to the room itself, since in the smallest hut of but six arshíns square thirty to forty persons can easily be served with meals.

The next business is to apportion provisions for every eating-house. This is done as follows: In one place, which is in the centre of the eating-houses, a storehouse of all necessary provisions is established. As such a storehouse at first Raévski's farmhouse served; but with the expansion of the business there were established, or rather chosen, three other storehouses in the estates of well-to-do landed proprietors, where there are granaries and some provisions for sale.

As soon as the dwelling for the eating-house is chosen, and the persons who are to come to it are marked down, a day is set on which the keepers of the eating-house by turns come or send a wagon after the provisions. As, on account of the great number of eating-houses, it is now troublesome to give out provisions every day, two days in the week have been set, Tuesday and Friday, when provisions are given out.

In the storehouse the keeper of an eating-house gets a little book of the following form:

RECEIPT BOOK OF EATING-HOUSE NO. ......

Day and Month	Where opened	Flour	Bran	Potat.	Cabb.	Beets	Cracked Oats	Fuel	Salt	Number of Eaters
Nov. 8	Lukérya Kotóv	4 p.	2 p.	6 p.	30 h.	2 p.	1 p.	10 p.	10 lb.	

The provisions are received according to this book, and everything is noted down.

Besides the provisions, teams come on a stated day from the villages in which there are eating-houses, to receive their fuel: at first it was turf, but now, since there is no more turf, it is wood. On the same day that the provisions are taken home, the loaves are baked, and two days later the eating-houses are opened. The question as to the dishes for cooking, the bowls, the spoons, the tables, is decided by the keepers of the eating-houses themselves. Every keeper uses his own dishes. What he lacks he borrows from those who eat at his house. Everybody brings his own spoon.

The first eating-house was opened at the house of a blind old man with a wife and orphaned grandchildren. When I, on the first day of the opening of this eating-house, arrived at eleven o'clock at the blind man's house, the woman had everything ready. The loaves were out of the oven and lay on the table and on the benches. In the heated oven, which was closed with a shutter, stood cabbage soup, potatoes, and stewed beets.

In the room were, besides the proprietors, two female neighbours and a homeless old woman, who had begged to be permitted to stay in the house, so as to have something to feed on and warm herself. There were no people there as yet. It turned out that they had been waiting for us, and so had not yet sent out the announcement. A boy and a peasant took it upon themselves to make the announcement. I asked the hostess how they would seat themselves.

"I will arrange it as is proper, have no fear," said the hostess.

This hostess is a stocky woman of fifty years of age, with a timid and restless, but bright expression. Before the opening of the eating-house she used to go out begging, thus supporting herself and her family. Her enemies say

of her that she is a drunkard. But, in spite of these accusations, she makes a favourable impression by her relations to the orphans, her husband's grandchildren, and to her worn-out, barely alive, blind old husband, who is lying on the bench-beds. The mother of these orphans died the year before; the father abandoned the children and went to Moscow, and there went to the dogs. The children — a boy and a girl — are very pretty, especially the boy, who is eight years old; in spite of their poverty, they are well-dressed, and they keep close to their grandmother and are exacting to her, as spoiled children are.

"Everything will be as it ought to be," says the hostess, "and I will get a table. And those who find no place, will eat later."

Out of four puds of flour, she informs me, she made nine loaves, and she has, besides, brewed some kvas. "But the turf has worn me out," she says. "It does not burn. I had to pull some straw down from my shed. I had to open cracks in the shed, for the turf would not burn."

As I have no other business here, I go beyond the ravine, to the eating-house of another village, fearing lest they should be waiting there, too, for me. And, indeed, so they were. Here it was again the same: the same odour of hot bread; the same round loaves on the tables and benches, and the same iron and clay pots in the oven and the curious people in the house. Here again volunteers run away to carry abroad the announcement. After talking awhile with the hostess, who, like the first, complains that the turf does not burn and that she has had to chop up a trough to be able to bake the bread, I return to the first eating-house, thinking that there might spring up some misunderstandings or difficulties, which it would be necessary to remove. I arrive at the blind man's house. The hut is full of people and is alive with a repressed motion, like an open beehive in summer-time.

Vapour escapes through the door. There is an odour of bread and of cabbage soup, and the sound of lapping is heard. The room is very small and dark; there are two tiny windows, which, at that, are on both sides covered high outside with manure. The floor is of earth and very uneven. It is so dark, especially from the mass of people in it, who with their backs conceal the windows, that at first it is impossible to make anything out. But, in spite of the inconveniences and crowding, the eating is going on in the greatest order. Along the front wall, on the left of the door, there are two tables, around which on all sides the people who are dining sit in orderly fashion. In the background of the room, — from the outer wall to the oven, are the hanging beds, on which the emaciated blind old man no longer lies, but sits up, embracing his lank legs with his hands, and listening to the conversation and to the sound of eating. On the right, in the unoccupied corner, before the mouth of the oven, stand the host, the hostess, and helpers, who have volunteered their services. They all watch the needs of the diners, and serve them.

At the table in the front corner, under the images, is a soldier of the days of Nicholas; then comes a village old man, then an old woman, then some children. At the second table, nearer to the oven, with the back to the partition, is the miserable-looking wife of a pope, and about her are her children, boys and girls, and her grown-up daughter. On each table is a bowl with cabbage soup, and the diners sip it, eating at the same time their fragrant bread. The bowls with the cabbage soup are emptied.

"Eat, eat," the hostess says cheerfully and hospitably, handing them chunks of bread over their heads. "I'll fill them up again. To-day we have only cabbage soup, and potatoes, — the beets are not done. You will have them for supper."

An old woman, barely alive, who is standing at the oven, begs me to send her some bread to her house; she has dragged herself up with difficulty, but she cannot come every day; her boy is eating here, so he will bring it to her. The hostess cuts off a piece of bread for her. The old woman puts it cautiously away in her bosom and thanks her for it, but does not leave. The sexton's wife, a lively woman, who is standing at the oven and helping the hostess, chattily and briskly thanks me for her little girl, who is eating here, sitting at the wall, and asks me timidly whether she, the sexton's wife herself, may not be allowed to eat here.

"I have not tasted pure bread for a long time, and that tastes to us as sweet as honey."

Having received permission, the sexton's wife makes the sign of the cross and climbs over a plank which is thrown from one bench to another. A boy next to her on one side, and an old woman on the other, make place for the sexton's wife, and she seats herself. After the first course of cabbage soup the potatoes are served. From the salt-cellar every person pours out a little pile of salt on the table in front of him, and dips the peeled potatoes in it. All this — the service at the table, the taking of the food, the seating of the people — is accomplished without haste and with decency and decorum, and, at the same time, in such a habitual manner as though what is taking place has always taken place and could not be done otherwise. It is something like a natural phenomenon. Having finished the potatoes and cautiously removed the remaining pieces of bread, the soldier of the days of Nicholas is the first to get up and climb out from behind the table, and all arise with him, turn to the images, and pray, then express their thanks and leave. Those who have been waiting for their turn without haste take their places, and the hostess again cuts bread and fills the bowls with cabbage soup.

Precisely the same happened in the second eating-house; the only special thing was that there were very many people there, almost forty of them, and the room was even darker and smaller than the first. But here was the same decorum of the guests, the same calm and joyous, somewhat proud relation of the hostess to her work. Here the host served, helping his mother, and matters went faster still. The same took place in all the other eating-houses which we had established, with the same decorum and naturalness. In some the zealous hostesses prepared three and even four courses: beet stew, cabbage soup, broth, potatoes.

The matter of the eating-houses is carried on as simply as many other peasant affairs, in which all the most complicated details are left to the peasants themselves. In the hauling, for example, for which peasants are hired, no employer ever bothers himself about mats, or pegs, or bast hampers, or buckets, or many other things which are indispensable for the hauling. It is assumed that all this will be arranged by the peasants themselves; and, indeed, all this is always and everywhere arranged uniformly, sensibly, and simply by the peasants themselves, without demanding any participation or attention from the employer. Just so they do things in the eating-houses.

All the details of the matter are attended to by the keepers of the eating-houses themselves, and this is done so definitely and so circumstantially that all that is left for the founder to do is to attend to general matters in regard to the eating-houses. There are four such important matters which are left for the founder of the eating-house to do: (1) to deliver the provisions to the centre, from which it can be distributed in all directions; (2) to attend to this, that the provisions shall not be wasted; (3) to attend to this, that the most needy persons shall not somehow be overlooked, or that instead such persons shall not receive free food as can get along without it; and

(4) to test and apply in the eating-houses new and little used foodstuffs, such as peas, lentils, millet, oats, barley, all kinds of bread, etc.

Quite a lot of trouble was caused us by providing for the people who were receiving a monthly allowance. Some of the members of the family, who were receiving an insufficient quantity, were admitted; others gave their monthly allowance to the eating-house, so as to be allowed to eat in it. In this matter we are guided by the following considerations: with the equal distribution of twenty pounds to each person, as is the case in our locality, we accept them preëminently from the large families; with the insufficient distribution, such as is twenty pounds per month, there are the more unprovided people, the greater the family is.

The theory of the eating-houses is, therefore, the following: to open from ten to twenty eating-houses, which should feed from three to eight hundred men, provisions must be collected in the centre of this locality. Such a centre may always be in a well-to-do proprietor's estate.

The provisions for such a number, let us say five hundred people, will consist (if the eating-houses are to be kept until the new harvest), figuring one pound of a mixture of meal and bran to each of the five hundred persons for three hundred days, of 150,000 pounds or 3,750 puds, or 2,500 puds of rye and twelve hundred puds of bran; the same number of pounds of potatoes, twelve sázhens of wood, one thousand puds of beets, twenty-five puds of salt, two thousand heads of cabbage, and eight hundred puds of oats. (The cost of all this, to judge from present prices, will be 5,800 roubles, that is, with the increase of the expense for oat broth, one rouble sixteen kopeks per man.) Having established such a storehouse, it is possible to proceed in a circumference of seven to eight versts to open as many as twenty eating-houses, which will provision themselves from this storehouse. First

of all it is necessary to open eating-houses in the poorest villages. The place for the eating-house should be chosen with one of the poorest peasants. The dishes and everything necessary for the preparation of the food and for the table should be left to the discretion of the keepers of the eating-house themselves. The list of the persons admitted to the eating-house should be made with the assistance of the elder and, if possible, of the well-to-do peasants, who do not send their families to the eating-house. The supervision of the eating-houses, if there are very many of them, should be left to the peasants themselves. Naturally, however, the greater the interest which the persons opening the eating-houses will show in this matter, the closer will their relations be with the keepers, and the guests of the eating-houses, — the better will the whole business proceed, the less waste and dissatisfaction will there be, and the better the food. And, above all else, the more cheerful will the mood of the people be. But it may boldly be said that, even with the most distant supervision, with being all left to themselves, the eating-houses will satisfy a demand and, in consequence of the supervision exercised by the interested peasants themselves, the useless waste of provisions will in no case be greater than ten per cent., if we may call it useless waste at all when people carry off some bread, or give it to those who have none. Such is the theory of the establishment of the eating-houses, and any person who wants to apply it will see how easily and how naturally this business is carried on.

The advantages and the disadvantages of the eating-houses are as follows:

The disadvantage of the eating-houses is, in the first place, this, that the provisioning in them costs a little more than the personal distribution of flour. If thirty pounds of flour are given as an assistance to every eater, the same thirty pounds of flour are used up in the eating-

houses, and, in addition, what is used for cooking, potatoes, beets, salt, fuel, and now oats. This disadvantage, to say nothing of the fact that the eating-houses provide better for the people than does the distribution of flour, is redeemed by the introduction of new, cheap, and wholesome foodstuffs, such as lentils, peas in various forms, oat-broth, beets, Indian meal porridge, sunflower and hemp-seed meal, whereby the quantity of the bread used up can be diminished and the food itself improved.

Another disadvantage is this, that the eating-houses keep from starvation only a few feeble members of the family, and not the young and adult people who do not frequent the eating-houses, considering this debasing to themselves. Thus, in determining those persons who are privileged to feeding in the eating-houses, the peasants always exclude the grown lads and girls, as they consider this disgraceful for them. This disadvantage is redeemed by the fact that the very shame which they feel in using the eating-houses prevents the possibility of misusing them. There comes, for example, a peasant demanding an increase of his monthly allowance, and asserting that he has not eaten for two days. He is asked to attend the eating-house. He blushes and refuses, while another peasant of the same age, who was left without any means and could find no work, comes to the eating-house. Or another example: a woman complains of her condition and begs for assistance. It is proposed to her that she should send her daughter. But her daughter is already a prospective bride, and the woman refuses to send her. And yet the daughter of the pope, who is a prospective bride, and whom I have mentioned before, comes to the eating-house.

The third disadvantage, the greatest of them all, is this, that a few feeble persons, old and young, and children without clothes, cannot attend, especially in bad weather. This inconvenience is removed by allowing those who

attend from the same farm, or their neighbours, to carry the food to them.

I know no other disadvantages and inconveniences.

Now the advantages of the eating-houses are as follows:

The food is incomparably better and more varied than what is prepared in the families. It is possible to make use of cheaper and more wholesome foodstuffs. The food is purchased at a lower price. There is a saving in fuel for the baking of bread. The poorest families, those where the eating-houses are established, are completely provided for. There is excluded the possibility of an inequality in the distribution of food which is frequently met with in families in respect to the members of it who are disliked; the old and the children receive the food which corresponds to their age. The eating-houses, instead of irritating and causing envy, evoke good sentiments. Misuse, that is, the receiving of assistance by persons who are least in need of it, may be less than with any other method of assistance. The limits of the misuse which may arise in the use of the eating-houses are set by the dimensions of the stomachs. A man may receive as much flour as he wishes, but nobody can eat more than a very limited amount. And above all else, the chief advantage of the eating-houses, for which alone they can and ought to be established everywhere, is this, that in the village in which there is an eating-house, a man cannot get sick or die from a lack of food, or from its poor quality; there cannot be what unfortunately is constantly repeated, — an old, feeble man, a sickly child, receiving poor and insufficient food now and then, falls off, grows sick, and dies, — if not directly from hunger, at least from the want of good food. And this is most important.

The other day, wishing to avoid all those examinations which had to be undertaken in the eating-houses formerly opened, as to who should be admitted and who not, we in a newly opened eating-house made use of a meeting of

the peasants to decide some of their affairs, by leaving it to them to determine who should attend the eating-houses. The first opinion, as expressed by many, was this, that it was impossible for them to do so, as there would be disputes and quarrels, and they would never be able to agree. Then the opinion was expressed that one person from each farm should be admitted. But this opinion was soon rejected. There were farms from which nobody needed to be admitted, and there were others where there was not one feeble person, but many. And so they agreed to accept our proposition, — to rely on people's honesty. "Meals will be prepared for forty persons, and whoever will come is welcome, and when all is eaten up, you must not think ill of us." This opinion was approved of. One man said that a healthy, strong man would himself be ashamed to come and eat up an orphan's portion. To this, however, a dissatisfied voice replied: "I should gladly refuse to come, but I cannot help it, for lately I have not eaten for two days."

This forms the chief advantage of the eating-houses. Whoever it may be, — whether he be listed in the village commune or not, a servant of the manor, a cantonist, a soldier, whether of the days of Nicholas or of Alexander, the wife of a pope, a burgher, a member of the gentry, an old or a young man, healthy, lazy, or industrious, a drunkard or sober, — so long as he is a man who has had nothing to eat for two days, — will receive the communal food. This is the chief advantage of the eating-houses. Where they exist, nobody will die of starvation and no one can be driven to work while he is hungry.

Everything you please except hunger may be a motive for more or less work. Animals may be trained by means of hunger and may be compelled to do things which are contrary to their nature, but it is time to understand that it is a shame to compel people by means of hunger to do, not what they wish, but what we want them to do.

But is the establishment of eating-houses everywhere possible? Is it a common measure, which may be applied anywhere and on a large scale? At first it seems that it is not possible, that it is but a private, local, accidental measure which can be applied only in certain spots, where people specially adapted to this business may be found. I myself thought so at first, when I imagined that it would be necessary to rent a hall for the eating-house, hire a cook, buy dishes, think out and determine what kind of food, when, and for how many persons to prepare; but the method of eating-houses which, thanks to I. I. Raévski, has now been established removes all these difficulties and makes this measure most accessible, simple, and popular.

With our feeble powers and without any special effort, we opened in four weeks and set a-going in twenty villages thirty eating-houses, in which about fifteen hundred persons are fed. But our neighbour, Mrs. N. F., herself in the course of one month opened and has conducted on the same principle sixteen eating-houses, in which not less than seven hundred persons are fed.

The opening of the eating-houses and their supervision present no difficulties, and their maintenance costs but a little more than the distribution of the flour, if it is supplied to the extent of thirty pounds per month. (Though we have not made any exact calculations, we assume that the support of each person in the eating-houses will in no case surpass one rouble fifty kopeks per month.)

This measure (the establishment of the eating-houses), which does not provoke any ill feelings in the masses, but, on the contrary, completely satisfies them, attains the chief end which now stands before society, which is, to secure people against the possibility of a death from famine, and so ought everywhere to be accepted. If it is possible for the County Council, — for the orators and the

administration, — to figure out the wants of the peasants and, providing flour, to give it to those who are in need, it will cost these people incomparably less labour to establish storehouses for the provisioning of the eating-houses, and the eating-houses themselves.

The other day we received a visit from an inhabitant of Kalúga, who brought the following proposition for our locality: a few landed proprietors and peasants of the Government of Kalúga, who have an abundance of fodder for cattle, sympathizing with the condition of the peasants of our locality, who are obliged at a great sacrifice to part with their horses, which they will not be able to buy back again in the spring for nearly ten times the price, have proposed to winter ten wagon-loads, that is, eighty horses from our locality. With the horses are to go some chosen men from those villages from which the horses will be taken; after taking them to their destination, they are to return home. In the spring chosen persons are to go for the horses and bring them back.

On the day following this proposition, there were found in the two villages where the announcement was made enough persons who were willing to send off these eighty horses, all of them young and good animals. Since then peasants have come every day, begging us to take their horses.

There can be no stronger and more definite answer to the question whether there is any famine, and of what dimensions. The want must be very great for the peasants to be willing so easily to part with their horses and to trust them to strangers. Besides, the offer and its acceptance are strikingly touching and instructive to me. The Kalúga peasants, who are not wealthy, are taking upon themselves considerable expense and labour and care for their brother peasants, whom they do not know and have never seen, and the peasants of our locality, who evidently comprehend the motives of their Kalúga

brothers and apparently feel that in case of need they would do the same, without the least hesitation entrust to a few people almost their last possessions, — their good, young horses, for which, even at present prices, they could get as much as five, ten, fifteen roubles.

If but one-hundredth part of such living, brotherly consciousness, of such union of men in the name of the God of love, existed in all men, — how easily, nay, not how easily, but how joyously we should be bearing this famine, and all possible material calamities!

Byegichévka, Dánkov County,
November 26, 1891.

AMONG THE SUFFERING

REPORT UP TO APRIL 12, 1892

OUR activity from the time of the last report consisted in the following:

Our first and chief business consisted in the establishment and management of eating-houses.

The eating-houses, of which, at the time of our former report, there were seventy-two, continue to multiply, and now they exist in four counties, Epiphany, Efrémov, Dánkov, and Skópin, in all 187. This multiplication has taken place in the following manner: from the villages adjoining those in which we have eating-houses, there come to us, now individual peasants, now representatives of the Commune with the elder, to ask us to open eating-houses among them. One of us goes to the particular village from which the petitioners have come, and, making the round of the farms, writes out a list of the property of the poorer inhabitants. At times, though very rarely, it turns out that a village from which deputies have come does not belong to the poorest and that there is as yet no urgent need of assistance; but in the majority of the cases the one who has made the round of the village has found, as is always the case upon close observation of peasant needs, that the condition of the poorest families is so bad that assistance is indispensable; and this assistance has been given by means of establishing eating-houses, to which the weakest members of the poorest families were admitted. In this manner the eating-

houses have grown up, and still continue to grow up, in those directions where the need is greater and less provided for, namely, in the direction of Efrémov County and especially of Skópin County, where the assistance is particularly scanty. There are in all 187 eating-houses, of which 130 are those where the guests receive cooked food and bread, and thirty-seven those where they receive only cooked food. This division into eating-houses with bread and without bread took place in March, because from that time on the County Councils began in the poorest villages of Dánkov County, where our eating-houses existed, to loan thirty pounds per man, and in Epiphany County more than thirty, so that in these counties the poorer population was either entirely provided with bread and needed only cooked food, — potatoes, cabbage, and other things, which, if the poorer peasants had had them, were entirely exhausted by March. For these poorer inhabitants were opened the eating-houses without bread, to which the guests come with their own bread. Having become accustomed to receive bread, too, in the eating-houses, the peasants were at first dissatisfied with this change, and announced that the advantage derived from these eating-houses did not pay for the trouble in bringing the wood by rotation from the groves and that they did not wish to make use of the eating-houses. But this dissatisfaction did not last long. Only the well-to-do refused to come, and they, too, very soon began to ask to be admitted to the eating-houses.

The amount allowed in these eating-houses without bread for each ten men per week was as follows: rye meal for kvas, five pounds; wheat meal for broth, two pounds; pea, oats, or maize meal for broth, ten pounds; peas, ten pounds; millet for porridge or broth, ten pounds; potatoes, two measures; beets, one measure; sauerkraut, one-half bucket; hemp oil, one-half pound; salt, four pounds; onions, one pound. Besides, in the

winter, one and one-half pounds of kerosene and sixty puds of wood were used up every week.

With this distribution every man gets two pounds of vegetables, that is, of potatoes, cabbage, and beets, per day, and one-half pound of meal food, that is, of millet, peas, and rye meal, which gives in a cooked form more than four pounds per day for each man.

These eating-houses are especially interesting in that they have given an object-lesson as to the faultiness of the conviction, which has taken firm root among the majority of the peasants themselves, that rye bread is the most appetizing, most wholesome, and at the same time the cheapest form of food. These eating-houses have shown beyond a doubt that peas, millet, maize, potatoes, beets, cabbage, oats, and pea broth satisfy the hunger more easily and form a more wholesome and cheaper food than bread. The people who came to the eating-houses without bread brought with them very small pieces of bread, and sometimes came entirely without any bread, and yet passed the winter with their hunger well satisfied and with good health, eating each day about two kopeks' worth of cooked food and two or three kopeks' worth of bread, whereas, eating nothing but bread, they used up at least seven and one-half kopeks' worth of food.

Here is the menu for the week, made up by one of our co-workers. Monday: cabbage soup, porridge; Tuesday: potato soup, pea broth, and the same for supper; Wednesday: pea soup, boiled potatoes, and, for supper, peas with kvas; Thursday: cabbage soup, pea broth, and the same for supper; Friday: potato soup, millet broth, and the same for supper; Saturday: cabbage soup, boiled potatoes, and, for supper, potatoes with kvas; Sunday: potato soup, porridge, and, for supper, peas with kvas.

The author of this menu was guided by those products which he had at his disposal at the given time. With beets, from which was prepared during the whole winter

the favourite beet stew, and with the oats broth, this menu can be varied still more without making the food more expensive.

Our eating-houses are distributed, according to localities, as follows (follows the list of eating-houses by counties and villages).

In all the eating-houses of these four counties 9,093 persons at present receive food.

Such was one business of ours, — the most important one.

Another business for the last winter months consisted in furnishing wood to the population in distress. This distress has become more and more marked as the months advanced, and beginning with the middle of winter, especially when the supplies were more or less secured, it became the most important business. In our locality, where there is no fuel, no turf, and there could be no thought of using straw as fuel, this distress became very great with the beginning of winter. Very frequently, not only children, but even adults, could be found, not on the oven, but inside the oven, which had had a fire started in it the day before and which still retained a little heat, and on many farms they tore down the fences, kilns, sheds, and even vestibules, using for fuel the straw, the wickerwork, and shavings.

Thanks to the liberal gifts of wood from various persons, we were able, besides what we needed for the eating-houses, to distribute more than three hundred sázhens to the people.

Our method of distribution was as follows: to the more well-to-do peasants, we sold wood at our price (counting five kopeks per pud as an average price for wood purchased in the groves and in Smolénsk); to the average peasants, we gave the wood on half shares at the station Klekótki, about thirty versts off, so that they took one-half and hauled the other half for us. To the poor peasants, who

had horses, we gave the wood gratis, on condition that they should haul it themselves from the station. To the very poorest peasants, without any horses, we gave the wood on the spot, at home, — the wood which those brought who brought it to us on shares.

Our third business was the feeding of the peasant horses. Besides the eighty horses, which in the beginning of winter were sent to the Government of Kalúga, twenty were taken to be boarded by Prince D. O. O., ten by Merchant S., and forty were placed on the farm of Mr. E., where they were fed on two car-loads of hay, contributed by P. A. U., and on old straw, given by the owner, and on other fodder which was purchased.

Before the beginning of spring, in February, two structures were put up on farms for the feeding of the peasant horses, — one on Mr. S.'s farm, the other on Mr. M.'s farm in Efrémov County. For the feeding of the horses, there were bought ten thousand puds of straw, two car-loads of pressed seeds, and three hundred puds of millet meal were provided for mash. By these means 276 horses were fed for the period of the last two months.

Our fourth business consisted in the distribution of flax and bast for work, and gratis to those who were in need of foot-gear and of cloth. One car-load of flax at 660 roubles was distributed to the needy gratis, and other eighty puds, and one hundred puds contributed, were distributed on half shares. The linen which is due us as our share has so far not reached us, so that we have been unable to satisfy the demands of Mrs. N., who sent us 120 roubles for the linen, and Mrs. K. M., who also offered to buy the peasant cloth, in order to furnish earnings to the peasant women.

Of the bast we have received as a contribution one car-load from P. A. U., one hundred puds from L., and one thousand bunches were bought for 219 roubles. Part of this bast has been sold at a low price, and part has been

distributed gratis to the most needy, while another part has been given on half shares for the weaving of bast shoes.

The bast shoes which are brought in are partly distributed, and partly will be. This business, the furnishing of material for earnings, was the least successful one for us. This business is so trifling, it is so inconvenient for us, who in relation to the peasants stand in a position of distributers of contributions, to take up the position of work-givers who demand strict account of the use of the material, that this matter has been a complete failure, calling forth nothing but unrealized expectations, envy, and evil sentiments. The best would have been, and we do this now, to sell these articles at the lowest prices to those who can purchase them, and to give them gratis to those who cannot buy them, — to the poorest.

Our fifth business, which began in February, consisted in the establishment of eating-houses for the smallest children, from a few months old, suckling babes, to those who are three years old. We established these eating-houses as follows: having described all the farms where there are children of that age, and where there is no milk, we chose a woman who had a cow that had come in, and offered her a remuneration of fifteen puds of wood and four puds of pressed seeds (which in price is equal to three roubles), if she would make a millet porridge with milk for ten babies of from one and one-half to three years old, and buckwheat porridge for suckling babes. For a babe of from one and one-half to three years old, two pounds of millet per week are furnished, and for suckling babes, one pound of buckwheat groats.

In the large villages these eating-houses are arranged as follows: milk is bought at forty kopeks per bucket. For suckling babes of less than a year, one pound per week is supplied; for children of from one to three years, two pounds. The youngest children receive one glass of milk

per day, the older, two glasses. Those who have no cows receive milk and millet in the form of porridge; those who have a cow, receive the porridge, in return for which they give milk.

The mothers sometimes come themselves for the porridge, which they carry home; at times they bring their babes with them and feed them on the spot. As a rule, in establishing these homes, the mothers, and so far as that goes, all peasants, propose, in the place of an eating-house in the hut of a certain peasant woman, that the millet and the groats be given out to them, asserting that they can get the milk anywhere from some good people. But we think that, to secure the health of the little children, precisely such an arrangement is necessary. Upon receiving five to ten pounds of millet or groats, every peasant woman, no matter how good a mother she may be, looks upon the millet and the groats as upon provision which belongs to the whole house, and makes use of it to the best of her knowledge and her needs, or as her husband may order, so that frequently the millet or the groats do not reach the children. But if she every day receives a portion of prepared milk gruel for her child, she will certainly feed it out to the child.

We have now some eighty such homes, and every day new ones are established. These homes, which at first called forth doubts, have now become a habitual phenomenon, and nearly every day women come with their children from the villages in which there are not yet such homes, begging us to establish them. These homes cost about sixty kopeks per month for every child.

Since it is absolutely impossible, in the complex and constantly changing matter with which we are occupied, to figure out exactly how much money we shall need in order to carry on everything undertaken by us until the next harvest, and we, therefore, do not begin anything which we cannot carry out to the end, we shall, in all

probability, have unexpended money left from the late contributions and from the sums expended in the form of loans, which are to be refunded in the fall. The best placement of such moneys, I think, will be the continuation of such homes for children for the next year. But if, as I am convinced, money and men will be found for it, why should they not be continued for ever? The general establishment of such homes, I assume, could greatly diminish the percentage of child mortality. Such was our fifth business.

The sixth business, which is beginning now, and which, in all probability, will be ended in one way or another when this report shall have appeared in print, consists in the distribution to the needy peasants of oats, potatoes, hemp, millet for sowing. The distribution of such seeds is particularly needed in our locality, because, besides the sowing of the summer fields, it has unexpectedly become necessary to make a new sowing of a considerable part of the rye, which in some localities has been spoiled nearly one-third. These seeds are distributed by us to the most needy peasants, whose land will inevitably remain unsowed if they do not receive seeds; but the seeds are not given to them gratis, but on condition that they will return them in grain from the new crops, independently of the present prices and of those prices which they may bring. The money received from these articles may be used for the establishment of homes for babes for the next winter.

The purchase of horses and their distribution forms our seventh business. Besides the immense number of those who have no horses, who never have a horse, which in some villages is as high as one-third, there are in the present year some peasants who have sold their horses and have spent the proceeds in food, and who now will inevitably fall into absolute poverty or slavery, if they are not provided with horses. We buy horses for such

peasants. This spring we have bought sixteen such horses, and it is necessary to buy one hundred more horses in the localities occupied by our eating-houses. We purchase these horses at the rate of about twenty-five roubles per horse, under the following conditions: the man who receives a horse puts himself under obligation to work the allotments of two souls for the poorer peasants who have no horses, for widows and orphans.

Our eighth business was the sale of rye, meal, and baked bread at cheap prices. This business, — the sale of baked bread, — which was continued to a small extent in the winter, was renewed with the arrival of spring. We have established bakeries for the sale of cheap bread at sixty kopeks per pud.

Besides these definite divisions, for which the money contributed has been used, small sums have been used by us in direct assistance to the needy for needs which cannot be put off, such as funerals, payment of debts, support of small schools, purchase of books, building, and so forth; there were very few such expenditures, as may be seen from the financial report.

Such has been our business in general outline for the past six months. Our chief business for this time has been the feeding of the distressed by means of eating-houses. During the winter months this form of aid, in spite of the misuse which occurred with it, in the main completely attained its end, which was, to provide for all the poorer and weaker population, for the children, old people, the sick, the convalescent, and thus save them from starvation and poor food. But with the approach of spring there present themselves certain considerations which demand a change in the existing order of the arrangement and management of the eating-houses.

With the approach of spring there presents itself, in the first place, the new condition that many who come to the eating-houses will be at work or attending to the

horses, and will be unable to attend the eating-houses during dinner and supper time; in the second place, in the summer, when the heat from the ovens in the eating-houses is intense, conflagrations may easily occur. We shall in its proper time give an account of how our activity will be changed in consequence of this, if we shall have a chance to do so.

We add a short general account of the contributions received by us, and of the use to which they have been put. We shall give and print later a complete account, if we have time for it.

ACCOUNT OF THE MONEY CONTRIBUTED FROM APRIL 12 TO JULY 27, 1892

DURING the summer our business consisted in the following: (1) in the maintenance of the formerly existing eating-houses and the establishment of new ones; (2) in the establishment of homes for suckling babes and children of two years of age; (3) in the distribution of seeds for the summer sowing; (4) in the purchase of horses; and (5) in the establishment of bakeries and the sale of baked bread. Our first business, the eating-houses, lasted from April 12th to July 20th, almost in the same form as in the preceding months, with this difference only, that, fearing fires from overheating, we stopped the baking of bread in the eating-houses. Where we were able to do so, we distributed baked bread, and where it was not possible to prepare a sufficient quantity of bread we distributed flour to the individuals. In many villages a few of our colabourers proposed to distribute the food for cooking to the individuals. At first this change was accepted with joy, but very soon the peasants in the great majority of the villages themselves wished to return to the old order.

The need of eating-houses was more felt in the summer, during the long day and tense labour, than in winter. Very frequently the women in many villages asked that, instead of having their dinner, to which they were entitled, their husbands or fathers, who came home late from work, might be accepted for supper.

The number of the eating-houses at that time was considerably increased.

There were in all 246 eating-houses, and in them were fed, at some times more than at others, between ten and thirteen thousand men.

The second business — the establishment of homes (thus the kitchens for the cooking of the gruel for the children were incorrectly called) — was continued on the old bases and became very popular. For some of the homes in the villages, where there were few cows (and in our district there were villages in which sixty per cent. of the farms had no cows), we bought cows on condition that those who received the cows should supply the milk for the children who were put on their lists. Wherever it was possible, the milk was bought.

There were in all two to three thousand children who were fed in 124 homes.

The third business, which consisted in the distribution of summer seeds, — oats, potatoes, millet, hemp, — we did as follows: upon arriving in a village where there were petitioners, we invited three or four well-to-do farmers, who were not in need, and read to them a list of persons in need of seeds, and by the indication of these honest men we determined the necessary quantity for every petitioner; sometimes we diminished, sometimes we increased it, and sometimes entirely scratched out some of them, and in their place put down others, who were not marked down on the list.

The fourth business, the distribution of horses to those who had regular farms, but whose horses had been sold for food or had been lost by some unfortunate accident, was particularly troublesome, because the aid for one person was too great and so provoked envy, recriminations, and dissatisfaction on the part of those whom we had to refuse. We determined on this kind of aid, as in the case of the seeds, by the indication of the honest men of the villages from which there appeared petitioners.

In these two matters we saw with peculiar clearness

what a difference there was between an activity which had for its purpose the feeding of a hungry man, and which was attained by the eating-houses, and an activity which has for its aim the aiding of the peasant farms, into which we were drawn by the distribution of oats, millet, hemp, potatoes, and horses.

Having undertaken in a certain locality to save men from the danger of suffering, growing ill, and perishing from the lack of food, we fully attained this end by establishing eating-houses in that locality. If there could occur misuses in connection with this, that is, if there were men who would have been able to provide food for themselves at home, and yet attended the eating-houses, these misuses were limited to the consumption of from two to five kopeks' worth of food per day. But having made it our aim to assist the peasant farms, we immediately encountered, in the first place, an insuperable difficulty in determining who was to be helped, and to what extent, and with what: in the second place, the enormity of the want, to meet which one hundred times the means we had at our disposal would not have been sufficient, and in the third place, the possibility of the greatest misuses, which always accompany a free or even a loan distribution.

Neither of these matters, in spite of the great efforts made by us to carry them out, left in us the consciousness of our having been of any actual use to the peasants of our locality.

Our fifth business was the baking of bread and the sale of bread at a low price. At first we sold bread at eighty kopeks, later at sixty kopeks per pud, and so we have continued to do until now.

This business has been going very nicely all the time. The masses think very highly of the possibility of always having cheap corn within reach. Frequently, especially in the summer, people came from a distance of ten versts

and more, and, having come too late for the first baking, which was all given away, had themselves booked, as in the cities for theatre boxes, for ten pounds for the next baking, and waited until noon for their portions.

At the end of July we intended to make an interruption in the eating-houses, continuing only the bread-baking and the children's homes, which are always necessary, and on which we proposed to expend whatever money was left at our disposal. But we did not succeed in making this interruption, because, in consequence of the cessation of the activity of the Red Cross, it was necessary immediately to establish eating-houses for all those who had been under the charge of the Red Cross, and who since July 20th had been left without any care. Since the first of August we have established seventy eating-houses for the most needy Red Cross charges, to whom soon were added the poorest of the landed peasants. Their number has been growing all the time.

The crops for this year, in the locality where we have been active, are like this: In a circle of about fifty versts diameter, in the centre of which we are, the rye crop is worse than last year. In many villages along the Don, — Nikítskoe, Myasnóvka, Páshkovo, — in which I was in the beginning of September, there was no rye whatsoever left. What had been left was either sowed or eaten up. There was no crop of oats at all, — there are very few who will have enough for seed. There are oat-fields that have not been mowed at all. The potatoes and millet are good, but not universally so. Besides, not all peasants sow millet.

I should not be able to give any definite answer as to the economic condition of the masses in the present year. I could not do so, because, in the first place, all of us, who last year busied ourselves with the feeding of the masses, are now in the condition of a doctor, who, being called to a man who has wrenched his foot, discovers that the whole man is sick. What shall the doctor say, when asked as

to the condition of the sick man? "What do you want to find out?" the doctor would ask. "Are you asking about the foot or about the whole condition of the patient? The foot is all right, — there is a simple sprain, — but the general condition is bad."

Besides, I could not answer the question as to what the condition of the masses is, "Is it hard, very hard, or nothing?" because all of us, who have lived close with the masses, have got too much used to their condition, which has been getting worse and worse.

If some one of the city inhabitants should in a severe cold in winter come into a peasant room, which was only slightly heated the day before, and should see the inhabitants of the room climbing, not down from the oven, but out of the oven, in which they pass their days by rotation, since this is the only means for getting warm, or the people burning the roofs of the outhouses and of the vestibule for fuel, eating nothing but bread which is baked from equal parts of meal and the worst kind of bran, and adult people disputing and quarrelling because a slice of bread cut off does not come within one-eighth of a pound of the established weight, or people not leaving the hut, because they have nothing to put on, they would be startled by what they saw. But we look upon such phenomena as upon something very common. And so the question as to the condition of the masses in our locality will be better answered by him who will come to our places for the first time than by us. We have become accustomed to the suffering, and we do not see anything now.

Some kind of a conception may be formed as to the condition of the masses in our locality from the following statistical data, excerpted from the *Túla Government Gazette.* During years with good crops, from 1886 to 1890, there died, in the four counties of Bogoróditsk, Epiphany, Efrémov, and Novosílsk, on an average, 9,761 men, and were born 12,069 persons, during the five months

from February to June inclusive. In the famine year, 1892, there died 14,309 persons and were born 11,383 persons, during the same months. In the ordinary year, the births surpass the deaths by an average of 2,308 persons, while in the present year the deaths surpassed the births by 2,926 persons. Thus the consequence of the failure of crops in these four counties was the diminution of the population as against other years by 5,234 persons. In comparison with other good years we get the following: In the four good counties, Túla, Káshir, Odóev, Byélev, there were born, during the same five months, 8,268 persons, and there died, 6,468 persons. But in the counties with poor crops there were born 11,383 persons, and there died 14,409, so that, while in the good counties the births are to the deaths approximately as four to three, in the bad counties the mortality is to the birth-rate as seven to five, that is, while in the good counties there were three deaths to every four births, in the bad counties there were five births only to seven deaths.

When we consider the relation in per cent., the condition of the bad localities is most strikingly expressed in the mortality during the month of June. In Epiphany County there died, in 1892, sixty per cent., in Bogoróditsk County 112 per cent., and in Efrémov County 116 per cent. more than in ordinary years.

Such were the consequences of the failure of crops during the last year, in spite of the increased aid offered by the government, the Red Cross, and private charity. What, then, will happen this year in our locality, where the rye has turned out worse than last year, oats have been a complete failure, fuel does not exist, and the last stores of the strength of the masses have been sapped during the last year?

Well, shall we again have starving people? Starving! Eating-houses! Eating-houses, — starving, — all that is so old, and we are so tired of it all.

We are tired of it in Moscow, in St. Petersburg; but here, where they stand from morning until evening beneath the windows or at the doors, and it is impossible to cross the street without hearing eternally the same phrases, "Have not eaten for two days, have sold the last sheep. What shall we do? The last end has come. Shall we die?" etc., here, however ashamed we are to confess this, we have become so sick of it that we look upon them as upon our enemies.

I get up very early; a clear, frosty morning with a red sunrise; the snow squeaks on the steps; I go out, hoping that no one has come yet, and I shall be able to take a walk. But no; I have barely opened the door, when, behold, two of them are already there, waiting: one is a tall, broad peasant, in a short, ragged fur coat and torn bast shoes, with a wallet over his shoulder; his face is haggard (they all have haggard faces, so that these faces have become the characteristic peasant faces). With them they have a boy of fourteen years of age, without a fur coat, in a tattered peasant coat, also in bast shoes and also with a wallet and a stick. I want to pass by them, but they begin to bow and to repeat the usual sentences. There is nothing to be done, and I return to the vestibule. They enter after me.

"What do you want?"

"To your Grace."

"What?"

"To your Grace."

"What is it you want?"

"In regard to the aid."

"What aid?"

"In reference to our living."

"But what is it you want?"

"We are starving. Help us some."

"Where do you come from?"

"From Zatvórnoe."

I know that this is a beggar village of Skópin County, where we have not yet had time to open an eating-house. Beggars come from there by the dozen, and I at once class this man in my imagination as a professional beggar, and I am angry at him, especially, because they take their children with them, and thus corrupt them.

"What do you ask?"

"Do something for us."

"How can I? We cannot do anything here. We shall go to your village."

But he pays no attention to me, and there begin once more the words which I have heard a hundred times and which appear to me to be untrue:

"We have had no crops; the family consists of eight souls, — I am the only worker, the old woman is dead; last year we sold the cow for food, at Christmas the last horse died. It makes no difference about me, — the children beg for something to eat; there is no place to go to, — we have not eaten for three days!"

All this is trite. I am waiting for him to get through. But he says:

"I thought I would manage somehow; but I have lost all my strength. I have not begged before, but God has brought me to this."

"Very well, — we shall come and see," I say, wishing to pass by, and I cast a desperate glance at the boy. The boy looks at me with pitiful, tear-filled, exquisite brown eyes, expressive of hope, and one bright tear-drop is already hanging on his nose and that very moment breaks off and falls on the snow-tracked board floor. And the dear, fatigued face of the boy, with his blond hair curling about his head, twitches more and more from repressed sobs. For me the words of the father are an old, trite subterfuge. But to him it is a repetition of that terrible year which he has gone through with his father, and the repetition of it all during that solemn moment, when they

have at last found their way to me, to the help, stir him, and shake his nerves, which are weakened from hunger. But I am tired, tired of it all; I am only thinking of how to take a walk as soon as possible.

To me it is old, but to him — terribly new.

Yes, we are tired of it. But they want to eat as much as ever; they want to live, they want happiness, they want love, as I could see by his charming tear-filled eyes, which were directed upon me, — and such is the want of the good, wretched boy, who is worn out by want and full of naïve pity for himself.

Byegichévka, September 11, 1892.

CONCLUSION TO LAST REPORT ON THE AID TO THE STARVING

Our two years' occupation in distributing among the distressed population such contributions as passed through our hands, more than anything else confirmed our old conviction that the major part of that distress, those privations, and those sufferings and the sorrow which goes with them, and which we almost vainly tried in an external manner to counteract in a small corner of Russia, was due, not to some exclusive, temporary causes, which did not depend on us, but to the most common, constant causes, which were fully dependent on us, and which consisted in nothing but the anti-Christian, non-brotherly relation of us, the cultured men, to the poor, the manual labourers, who always bear that want and those privations and the sufferings and sorrows connected with them, though in the last two years these have been noticed by us more than ever. If in the present year we do not hear of the distress, cold, and hunger, and the dying of adults worn out by labour, and of the young and old who do not get enough to eat, by the hundred thousand, this will not be due to the fact that this will not be, but because we shall not see it; we shall forget it, shall assure ourselves that this does not exist, or, if it exists, that it must be so and cannot be otherwise.

But this is not true: it not only cannot be, but it ought not to be and will not be.

No matter how well concealed a glass of wine seems to us in respect to the working classes, no matter how

clever, old, and common the excuses may be by which we justify our luxurious life amidst the working people, who are worn out by labour and do not get enough to eat and serve our luxury, — the light penetrates more and more into these our relations to the labouring people, and we shall soon show ourselves in that shameful and perilous position in which a criminal finds himself when the unexpected daybreak overtakes him on the place of execution. If it was possible formerly for a merchant, who was selling to the labouring people useless, and frequently harmful and worthless articles, trying to take for them as much as possible, or even selling corn which was good and needful, but had been bought cheaply and was sold at a high price, to say that he was serving the needs of the masses by means of honest commerce; or for a manufacturer of cottons, mirrors, cigarettes, or for a distiller of spirits, or for a brewer of beer, to say that he is feeding the masses, by giving them work to do; or for an official who receives thousands in salary, collected from the last pennies of the masses, to assure himself that he is serving for the good of the masses; or, what in these last years has been most obvious in the famine-stricken localities, if it was formerly possible for a landed proprietor, who worked his land by means of the hungry peasants for less than the value of bread, or who rented this same land to the peasants for the highest possible price, to say that, by introducing improved farming, he was contributing to the welfare of the country population; — now that the masses are starving from lack of land amidst the enormous fields of the landed proprietors, which are planted with potatoes, to be sold for spirit, or for starch, it is impossible to say so. It is impossible now, amidst these masses all about us, who are degenerating from the lack of food and the superabundance of work, not to see that every absorption by us of the products of the labour of the masses on the one hand

deprives them of what is necessary for their sustenance, on the other increases their work, which, as it is, has been carried to the highest point of tension. To say nothing of the senseless luxury of parks, flower gardens, chases, — every glass of brandy swallowed, every piece of sugar, butter, meat is, on the one hand, so much food taken from the masses, and, on the other, so much labour added to them.

We Russians find ourselves in this respect in the most favourable conditions for seeing clearly our position.

I remember how once, long before the famine years, a young, morally sensitive Prague scholar, who visited me in the country, upon coming in the winter out of the house of a comparatively wealthy peasant, into which we had gone, and in which, as everywhere else, there was a prematurely aged old woman, worn out by work and clad in rags, a sickly child which had ruptured itself by crying, and, as always in the spring, a calf tied up and a ewe with its new-born lamb, and dirt, and dampness, and infected air, and a gloomy householder, crushed by life, — I remember how, coming out of it, my young acquaintance began to say something to me, and suddenly his voice faltered, and he burst out weeping. It was for the first time that he, after several months passed in Moscow and in St. Petersburg, where, walking on asphalt sidewalks, past elegant shops, from one wealthy house to another, from one luxurious museum, library, palace, into another, a building just as superb, saw those men, on whose labour rested all that luxury, and he was horrified and startled by it. He, in his wealthy and cultured Bohemia, like any European, especially a Swede, a Swiss, a Belgian, may imagine, though he will be wrong, that where there is relative freedom, where culture is widely diffused, where every man is given the chance of entering into the ranks of the cultured, that luxury is only a legitimate reward of labour and does not ruin the lives

of others. He may somehow forget those generations of men, in the mines of that coal by means of which the greater part of the articles of his luxury are made; he can forget, since he does not see them, that other breed of men, who die in the colonies, working for the gratification of his desires; but we Russians can by no means think so: the connection between our luxury and the sufferings and privations of the people of the same breed with us, is entirely too obvious. We cannot help but see that price of human life at which we buy our comforts and our luxury.

For us the sun has already risen, and it is evident that nothing can be hidden. We can no longer hide ourselves behind the government, behind the necessity of governing the masses, behind the sciences, the arts, which are supposed to be indispensable to the masses, behind the sacred rights of property, behind the necessity of sustaining tradition, and so forth. The sun has risen, and all these transparent shrouds do not conceal anything from any one. All see and know that the men who serve the government do not do this for the good of the people, who do not ask for it, but only because they need a salary; and the men who busy themselves with the sciences and the arts, busy themselves with them, not for the enlightenment of the people, but for the fee and the pension; and that the men who keep the land from the people and raise the price on it do not do so for the purpose of maintaining certain sacred rights, but for the increase of their incomes, which they need for the gratification of their lusts. There is no possibility of concealment or of lying.

There are but two ways out for the ruling, wealthy, non-working classes, — one is, to renounce, not only Christianity in its real meaning, but also every semblance of it, — to renounce humanity and justice, and to say: "I possess these advantages and prerogatives, and I shall retain them at all costs. Any one who wants to take

them from me will have his dealings with me. I have the power in my hands, — soldiers, gallows, prisons, scourges, and capital punishment."

Another way out consists in recognizing the injustice, ceasing to lie, repenting, not in words only, or by coming to the aid of the masses with pennies which have been taken from them with suffering and pain, as has been done during the last two years, but by breaking down that artificial barrier which stands between us and the working people; in recognizing them, not in words, but in deeds, as our brothers, and for this purpose changing our lives; in renouncing those advantages and prerogatives which we have, and, having renounced them, in putting ourselves on an equal footing with the masses, and together with them attaining those benefits of government, science, civilization, which we pretend we are trying to transmit to them in an external manner, without asking their wish about it.

We are standing on the cross-road, and the choice is inevitable.

The first way out means devoting ourselves to a constant lie, to a constant terror of this lie being discovered, and yet the consciousness that sooner or later we shall inevitably be driven away from the position which we are holding now with such stubbornness.

The second way out means a voluntary recognition and execution in life of what we ourselves are proposing, what our heart and our reason demand, and what sooner or later will be fulfilled, if not by us, at least by others, because only in this renunciation of the power by the ruling people lies the one way out from those torments from which suffers our pseudo-Christian humanity. This way out lies only in the renunciation of what is false and in the recognition of true Christianity.

October 28, 1893.

NICHOLAS STICK

1886

NICHOLAS STICK

We passed the night at the house of a soldier ninety-five years old, — he had served under Alexander I. and under Nicholas.

"Well, grandfather, do you want to die?"

"To die? Of course I want to very much! I used to be afraid to, but now I beg God for nothing but this, — to give me a chance to repent and to receive the extreme unction. I have so many sins upon me."

"What are your sins?"

"What sins? Do you know when I served? I served under Nicholas! It was a different kind of service from what it is nowadays. What was it then? Ugh! It makes me shudder to think of it. I served even under Alexander, and him the soldiers used to praise, — they said that he was merciful."

I recalled the last period of Alexander's reign, when twenty out of each hundred men used to be beaten to death. A fine man Nicholas must have been, if in comparison with him Alexander was called merciful!

"It was my fate to serve under Nicholas," said the old man.

He immediately became enlivened and began:

"How was it then? Then they did not even take off the breeches for fifty rods; one hundred and fifty, two

hundred, three hundred, — they used to beat men to death!"

He spoke with disgust and terror, and not without pride about the ancient exploits.

"Not a week passed but that a man or two of the regiment was beaten to death with sticks. Nowadays they do not know what a stick is, but then the word did not leave the mouth: 'Sticks, sticks!'

"Our soldiers nicknamed Nicholas, calling him 'Stick.' He was Nicholas Pávlovich, but they used to say 'Nicholas Stick.' And this nickname stuck to him. So, as I think of those days," continued the old man, "well, I have outlived it all, it is time for me to die, — as I think of it all, I feel horribly.

"Many a sin did I take upon my soul. It was all a question of subordination. They count you off one hundred and fifty rods for a soldier" (the old man had been an under-officer and sergeant, and now was a candidate), "and you count off two hundred to him. Your wounds do not heal up from it, but you torment him, — and so here is a sin.

"The under-officers used to beat the young soldiers to death. They would strike with the butt of a gun or the fist on some chosen spot, — the chest or the head, — and he would die. And there was never any inquest about the matter. He died from beating, but the authorities wrote, 'Died by the will of God,' and that was the end of it. Did I understand anything then? I only thought of myself. But now, as I toss about on the oven, unable to sleep through the night, I cannot help but think and see it all; it will be well if I have a chance to get my extreme unction in Christian fashion, and am forgiven, for I am seized by terror. As I think what I myself suffered and what others suffered from me, I do not need any hell, — it was worse than any hell."

I vividly imagined what this dying man must be re-

calling in his old man's loneliness, and a chill passed through me. I recalled all those horrors, besides the sticks, in which he must have taken part, — the driving to death between two rows, the shooting, the murder, and the pillage of cities and villages in war (he himself had taken part in the Polish war), and I began to ask him about it. I asked him about the driving between two rows.

He told me in detail about this terrible affair, — how they led a man tied to guns between an avenue of soldiers with sharpened sticks, how all struck him, while officers walked behind the soldiers, calling out, "Strike harder!" "Strike harder!" The old man called out in a commanding voice, evidently not without pleasure recalling and repeating the dashing tone of a commander.

He told me all the details without any sign of repentance, as he might have told about killing steers and curing beef. He told me how they used to lead the unfortunate man up and down between the rows, how the stricken man stretched forward and fell on the bayonets; how at first the bloody wales were visible, then crossed, then blended together; how the blood came out and spirted; how the blood-covered flesh flew in clusters; how the bones were laid bare; how the unfortunate man at first cried, then only groaned in a dull voice with every step and every stroke; how he then grew quiet, and how the doctor, who was detailed to do this, came up, felt the pulse, examined the man, and determined whether the man might be beaten again without being killed, or whether they had better wait and put off the rest till another time, when the wounds had healed up, in order to begin the torture from the beginning and finish the number of strokes which certain beasts, with Stick at their head, had decided must be administered. The doctor used his knowledge to keep the man from dying until he had endured all the torments which his body could bear.

He told how, when the man could no longer walk, they put him prostrate on a military cloak, with a blood-covered pillow down the spine; how they carried him to the hospital to be cured, so that, when he was cured, he might receive the missing one or two thousand strokes, which he had not yet received and was unable to bear at one time. He told me how they begged for death, and did not get it at once, but were cured and beaten a second, sometimes a third time. And the man lived and tossed about in the hospital, awaiting new torments, which would bring him to death. And all this, because a man ran away from the army, or had the manliness, daring, and self-renunciation to complain for his comrades that they were badly fed, and that the authorities stole their shares.

He told me all this, and when I tried to evoke his repentance at these recollections, he at first looked surprised and then frightened.

"No," he said, "why should I? It was according to judgment! Was I guilty of it? It was according to the law."

The same calm and absence of repentance he showed in relation to the military horrors in which he had taken part, and many of which he had seen in Turkey and in Poland.

He told me of the murder of children, of the starvation and freezing of captives, of the killing with a bayonet of a young Pole who pressed himself against a tree. And when I asked him whether his conscience did not torment him for these acts, he absolutely failed to understand me. This was in a lawful war, for king and fatherland. Those were not only not bad acts, but such as he regarded as valorous, virtuous, and redeeming his sins. What troubled him was only his personal acts, when he, being a commander, used to beat and punish his men. It was these acts that tormented his conscience; but to purge himself from them he has a salvation, and that is the extreme

unction, which he hopes he will succeed in receiving before death, and for which he has begged his niece. His niece, understanding the importance of it, has promised it to him, and he is satisfied.

His having ruined and killed innocent children and women, his having killed men with bullets and the bayonet, his having beaten to death people, standing in the row, and having dragged them to the hospital, and again back to the torture, — all this does not trouble him: all this is, as it were, not his affair. All this was, as it were, not done by him, but by another person.

What would happen to this old man, if he comprehended, what ought to be so clear to him who was standing on the threshold of death, that between him, his conscience, and God, as now, on the eve of death, there was no mediator, and there can be none, just as there could be none at that moment, when he was made to torment and kill people? What would happen to him, if he now understood that there is nothing to redeem the evil which he did to men, when he was able not to do it? If he understood that there is one eternal law, which he has always known and could not help knowing, a law demanding love and compassion for people, and that what he called law was a detestable, godless deception, to which he ought not to have submitted? It is terrible to think what would present itself to him in his sleepless nights on the oven, and what his despair would be, if he understood that, when he had the strength to do good and evil to men, he did only evil; that, when he has come to understand what the evil and what the good consists in, he is no longer able to do anything but be uselessly tormented and repent? His sufferings would be terrible!

"Why, then, wish to torment him? Why torment the conscience of a dying old man? It would be better to calm it. Why irritate the people and remind them of what is long past?"

Past? What is past? Can that pass which we have not only not begun to eradicate and cure, but which we even are afraid to call by name? Can a cruel disease pass, only because we say that it has passed? It does not pass and will never pass and cannot pass, so long as we do not recognize ourselves as sick. To cure a disease, we must first recognize it. But we do not do this. We not only fail to do this, but we employ all our efforts to the end that we may not see it, may not call it by name.

The disease does not pass, but is only modified; it eats deeper into the flesh, the blood, the bones. The disease consists in this, that men born good and meek, men illuminated by Christian truth, men with love implanted in their hearts, with compassion for men, commit — man over men — frightful cruelties, without knowing themselves why they are committing them and for what purpose. Our Russians, meek, good men, impressed with the spirit of Christ's teaching, who repent in their hearts for having offended men with a word, for not having given their last to mendicants and not having shown pity to prisoners, — these men pass the best period of their lives in murder and in torturing their brothers, and not only fail to repent of their acts, but even consider these acts virtuous or, at least, indispensable, just as inevitable as food or breathing. Is this not a terrible disease? And is it not incumbent on everybody to do everything he can, in order to cure it, and, first of all and above all else, to point it out, to recognize it, to call it by its name?

The old soldier has passed all his life in torturing and killing other people. We say, "Why mention it? The soldier does not consider himself guilty, and those terrible deeds — the stick, the driving through the rows, and the others — have already passed; why mention the past? Nowadays these things no longer exist.

"There was a Nicholas Stick. Why mention him?

It is only the old soldier who mentioned him before his death. Why irritate the people?"

Just so they spoke during Nicholas's reign of Alexander. The same was in Alexander's time said of the deeds of Paul. The same was said in Catherine's time of Peter, and so forth. Why mention it all?

Why mention it? If I have had a bad or a dangerous disease, which was hard to cure, and I am freed from it, I shall gladly mention it. I shall refrain from mentioning it only when I am ailing, ailing badly, and am getting worse and want to deceive myself. Only then will I not mention it. And we do not mention it, only because we know that we are as ill as ever.

"Why pain the old man and irritate the people? The sticks and the driving between the rows, — all that is long past." Past? Changed in form, but not past.

Everything that has taken place in some past we recall, not only with terror, but even with indignation. We read the descriptions of executions, burnings for heresies, tortures, military settlements, sticks, and drivings through the rows, and it is not so much that we are frightened at the cruelty of men, as that we cannot even imagine the mental conditions of those men who did all that. What was there in the soul of the man who got up in the morning, washed himself, put on his boyar garments, prayed to God, and then went to the execution-room to wrench joints and to beat old men and women with the knout, and at this occupation passed his customary five hours, like a modern official of the Senate, then returned to his family and calmly sat down to dinner, and then read the Holy Scripture? What was there in the souls of those commanders of regiments and of companies (I knew one such) who the evening before danced with a beauty at a ball, and went away earlier than usual, in order early on the following morning to attend to the execution by driving through the rows of a fugitive sol-

dier, a Tartar, and who had this man beaten to death, and then returned home to dine with his family? All this happened in the time of Peter, and of Catherine, and of Alexander, and of Nicholas. There was no time when there did not exist those terrible deeds, which we, reading of them, are unable to understand. We cannot understand how people failed to see those horrors which they committed, how they failed to see, if not the bestial inhumanity of those terrors, at least their senselessness. This happened at all times.

Is our time indeed so particularly fortunate that we do not have those horrors, those deeds, which to our descendants will appear just as incomprehensible? There are the same deeds, the same horrors, but we do not see them, just as our ancestors did not see the horror of their horrors. We now see clearly, not only the cruelty, but also the senselessness of the burning of heretics and of judicial tortures for the purpose of discovering the truth. A child sees the senselessness of these things. But the men of that time did not see it. Clever, learned men asserted that the rack was an indispensable condition of the life of men, that it was hard, but that it was impossible to get along without it. The same was the case with the sticks, with slavery. And the time has passed, and it is hard for us to imagine the condition of men, in which such a gross aberration was possible. But this has existed at all times, and so it must exist in our time, and we are, no doubt, just as much blinded in respect to our horrors.

Where are our tortures, our slavery, our sticks? We imagine that they do not exist, that this was before, but is now past. We imagine so, because we do not wish to understand the past, and because we carefully close our eyes to it.

But if we look into the past, our present situation and its causes will be revealed to us. If only we will call the stakes, brandings, tortures, executioner's blocks, re-

cruitments, by their real names, we shall also find the true name for the prisons, penitentiaries, armies with universal military service, prosecuting attorneys, and gendarmes.

If we will not say, "Why recall it?" but will look attentively at what used to be done in former times, we shall understand and see clearly what is being done now.

If it is clear to us that it is silly and cruel to chop heads off on the block and to find out the truth from people by means of wrenching their bones, it will become equally clear that it is just as silly and cruel, if not more so, to hang people and to put them in solitary confinement, which is equal to or worse than death, and to find out the truth by means of hired lawyers and prosecuting attorneys. If it shall become clear to us that it is silly and cruel to kill an erring man, it will become equally clear that it is sillier still to put such a man in the penitentiary, in order completely to demoralize him; when it becomes clear that it is silly and cruel to catch peasants for the army and brand them like cattle, it will become clear that it is just as silly and cruel to put into the army every man of twenty-one years of age. If it is clear how silly and cruel John the Terrible's guard was, the silliness and cruelty of the body-guard and the protective guard will become much clearer still.

If we only stop closing our eyes to the past, and saying, "Why remember the past?" it will become clear to us that in our time there are just such horrors, only in new forms.

We say, "All this has passed; we have no longer the rack, harlot Catherines with their plenipotentiary lovers, no longer any slavery, nor beating to death with sticks, etc."

But this only seems so! Three hundred thousand men in penitentiaries and prisons sit locked up in narrow, stinking apartments and die a slow bodily and moral

death. Their wives and children are cast away without any support, while these men are kept in dens of debauchery, in prisons and penitentiaries, and it is only to the wardens, the complete masters of these slaves, that this cruel, senseless confinement is of any use.

Tens of thousands of men with "harmful ideas" carry these ideas in their exile to the most distant corners of Russia, lose their minds, and hang themselves. Thousands sit in fortresses, and are either secretly killed by the chiefs of the prisons, or lose their minds in their solitary confinement. Millions of people perish, physically and morally, in slavery to manufacturers. Hundreds of thousands are every autumn taken away from their families, from their young wives, are taught to commit murder, and are systematically corrupted.

The Russian Tsar cannot drive out anywhere without having about him a visible chain of hundreds of thousands of soldiers, who are stationed along the road at a distance of fifty feet from one another, and a secret chain, which follows him everywhere.

A king collects the tribute and builds a tower, and on the tower he makes a pond, and on the pond, which is painted with blue paint, and which is made to produce the semblance of a storm by means of a machine, he goes rowing in a boat. And the people starve in factories in Ireland, in France, in Belgium.

It does not take special penetration to see that everything is the same in our time, and that our time is full of the same horrors, the same tortures, which for subsequent generations will be just as remarkable on account of their cruelty and their silliness. The disease is the same, and those who are diseased are not those who take advantage of these horrors. Let them take a hundred and a thousand times more advantage of the horrors; let them build towers and theatres, and give balls; let them fleece the people; let Stick beat the people to death; let Pobyedonóstsev

and Orzhévski secretly hang people by the hundred in the prisons, — so long as they do it themselves. Let them stop corrupting the people, deceiving them, causing them to take part in it, as the old soldier took part in it.

This terrible disease is in the deception, in the fact that for a man there can be some holiness and some law which is higher than the holiness and law of love of neighbour; in the deception, which conceals the fact that a man, to fulfil the demands of other men, is able to commit many acts, except one kind of acts, which he, as a man, is never able to commit: he can at no man's request go against God's will, — he cannot kill and torture his brothers.

Eighteen hundred years ago it was said, in reply to the Pharisees' question whether tribute ought to be given to Cæsar: "Unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." If men had any faith at all, and regarded even so little as due to God, they would first of all consider themselves under obligation to God, not only in respect to what God taught man in words, when he said, "Thou shalt not kill;" when he said, "Do not unto another what thou dost not wish shall be done unto thee;" when he said, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," — but also in respect to what God wrote in indelible characters in the heart of every man, — love of his neighbour, compassion toward him, horror of murder and of the torturing of his fellow men.

If men believed in God, they could not help but recognize this first obligation toward Him, which is, not to torture, not to kill. And then the words, "Unto God the things that are God's, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," would have for them a definite meaning. "To the Tsar, or to anybody else, everything you please," the believer would say, "only not what is contrary to God's will. Cæsar needs my money, let him take it; my house, my labours, let him take them; my wife, my children, my life, let him take them; all that is not God's.

But if Cæsar needs that I should raise and let fall a rod on the back of my neighbour, — that is God's. This is my act, my life, that of which I shall give an account to God, and God has commanded me not to do this, and this I cannot give to Cæsar. I cannot bind, lock up, persecute, kill a man: all this is my life, and that is God's, and I cannot give it to any one but God."

The words, "Unto God the things that are God's," mean to us that we are to give to God penny candles, masses, words, — in general, everything which nobody needs for any purpose, least of all God; but everything else, our whole life, the whole holiness of our soul, which belongs to God, we give to Cæsar, that is (according to the meaning which "Cæsar" has for the Jews), to a hateful stranger.

This is terrible! Men, come to your senses!

WHY PEOPLE BECOME INTOXICATED

1890

WHY PEOPLE BECOME INTOXICATED

I.

WHENCE the use of intoxicating substances, — of whiskey, wine, beer, hashish, opium, tobacco, and other less common substances, — ether, morphine, muscarine? Why did it begin, and why has it so rapidly spread among all kinds of people, among savages and civilized men alike? What does this mean, that wherever there is no whiskey, wine, or beer, there is opium or hashish, muscarine, and other substances, and tobacco everywhere?

Why must people become intoxicated?

Ask a man why he has begun to drink wine and continues to do so, and he will answer you: "For no reason, it is agreeable, all men drink," and he will add: "For a pastime." Others again, who have never once given themselves the trouble to think out whether it is good or bad that they drink wine, will add that wine is wholesome, gives strength; that is, they will say what has long ago been proved to be untrue.

Ask a smoker why he began to smoke tobacco and still continues to do so, and he will answer: "For no reason, from tedium, everybody smokes."

In the same way, no doubt, will answer the users of opium, hashish, morphine, muscarine.

"For no reason, from tedium, for pleasure, everybody does so." But it is good, *for no reason, from tedium, for pleasure, because everybody does so*, to twirl the fingers, to whistle, to sing songs, to play the pipe, and so forth, that is, to do something for which it is not necessary to waste natural riches, nor to spend great forces of labour, to do something which does not do any palpable evil to oneself or to others. But for the production of tobacco, wine, hashish, opium, millions and millions of the best lands are taken up, frequently among populations in need of land, by plantations of rye, potatoes, hemp, poppy, grapevines, and tobacco, and millions of labourers — in England one-eighth of the population — are busy all their life producing these intoxicating substances. Besides, the use of these substances is apparently harmful, produces terrible calamities, which are known to all and recognized by them, and from which more men perish than from all wars and infectious diseases taken together. And people know this; so this cannot happen *for no reason, from tedium, for pleasure*, only *because all do so.*

There must be something else in this. One constantly and everywhere meets people who love their children, who are ready for their good to make all kinds of sacrifices, and who at the same time spend on whiskey, wine, beer, or opium, or hashish, or even tobacco, what would either completely provide for their suffering and starving children, or would at least free them from privations. It is evident that if a man, who is put to the necessity of choosing between the privations and sufferings of his family, which he loves, and abstinence from intoxicating substances, none the less chooses the first, he is incited to this by something more important than because everybody does so and because it is agreeable. Evidently this is not done *for no reason, from tedium, for pleasure*, but there is some more important reason.

This reason, so much as I have been able to understand

it from reading about this subject and observing other people, and especially myself, when I used to drink wine and smoke tobacco, according to my observations consists in the following:

During the period of his conscious life a man may frequently observe two separate beings in himself: one — a blind, sensuous being; the other — a seeing, spiritual being. The blind, animal being eats, drinks, rests, sleeps, breeds, and moves as moves a wound-up machine; the seeing, spiritual being, which is bound up with the animal being, does not do anything itself, but only estimates the activity of the animal being by coinciding with it, when it approves of this activity, and disagreeing with it, when it does not approve of it.

This seeing being may be compared with the hand of a compass, which with one end points to the north, and with the other to the opposite, the south, and which along its whole extent is covered by a strip that is invisible so long as that which carries the hand moves in its direction, and which steps out and becomes visible, as soon as that which bears the hand declines from the direction pointed out by it.

Similarly the seeing, spiritual being, whose manifestation in life we call conscience, always points with one end to the good, with the other, the opposite end, to evil, and we do not see this, so long as we do not decline from the direction given by it, that is, from evil to good. But we need only commit an act which is contrary to the direction of our conscience, and there appears the consciousness of the spiritual being, which indicates the deviation of the animal activity from the direction indicated by the conscience. And as a navigator would not be able to continue to work with the oars, the engine, or the sails, knowing that he is not going whither he ought to go, so long as he did not give to his motion the direction which corresponds to the hand of the compass, or did not conceal

from himself its declination, so also any man, who has come to feel the doubling of his conscience with the animal activity, cannot continue this activity, unless he brings it into harmony with his conscience or conceals from himself the indications of his conscience as to the irregularity of the animal life.

Man's whole life, it may be said, consists only in these two activities: (1) the bringing of its activity into harmony with conscience, and (2) the concealment of the indications of his conscience for the sake of continuing life.

Some do the first, others the second. In order to accomplish the first there is but one method, — a moral illumination, the increase of light in oneself, and attention to what it illuminates; for the second, — for the concealment of the indications of conscience, — there are two methods: an external and an internal one. The external method consists in occupations which distract the attention from the indications of conscience; the internal one consists in the obscuration of conscience itself.

As a man is able in two ways to conceal from his view an object in front of him, by an external distraction of attention toward other, more striking objects, and by a soiling of the eyes, so also may a man conceal from himself the indications of his conscience in a twofold manner: by an external distraction of attention through all kinds of occupations, cares, amusements, plays, and by an internal soiling of the organ of attention itself. For people with a dulled, limited moral sense external distractions are frequently quite sufficient to prevent their seeing the indications of conscience as to the irregularity of life. But for morally sensitive people these means are frequently insufficient.

The external methods do not completely distract the attention from the consciousness of the discord between life and the demands of conscience; this consciousness

impedes life, and men, to have the possibility of living, have recourse to the indubitable inner method of the obscuration of conscience itself, which consists in the poisoning of the brain by means of intoxicating substances.

Life is not such as it ought to be according to the demands of conscience. The strength is lacking to turn life in accordance with these demands. The distractions which may divert one from the recognition of this discord are insufficient, or they have become tedious, and so, to be able to continue to live in spite of the indications of conscience as to the irregularity of life, men poison, for a time stopping its activity, that organ through which the indications of conscience are manifested, just as a man who purposely throws dust into his eyes would conceal from himself what he does not wish to see.

II.

NOT in the taste, not in the gratification, not in the distraction, not in the pleasure lies the cause of the universal diffusion of hashish, opium, wine, tobacco, but only in the necessity of concealing from oneself the indications of conscience.

One day I walked along the street, and passing by some drivers who were conversing, I heard one of them say to another, "Everybody knows a sober man feels conscience-stricken."

A sober man feels conscience-stricken at what does not so affect a drunken man. With these words was expressed the essential fundamental cause for which men have recourse to intoxicating substances. Men have recourse to them, either that they may have no stricken conscience after committing an act which is contrary to their conscience, or that they may in advance bring themselves to a state in which they can commit an act which is contrary to their conscience, but toward which they are drawn by their human nature.

A sober man feels conscience-stricken to go to lewd women, to steal, to kill. A drunken man has no such feeling, and so, if a man wants to commit an act which his conscience forbids, he intoxicates himself.

I remember the declaration of the cook under trial, who had killed a relative of mine, an old lady, whose servant he had been. He said that when he sent away the chambermaid, his mistress, and the time came for action, he started for the sleeping-room with a knife, but felt that a sober man could not commit the act he had

undertaken, — "A sober man is conscience-stricken." He went back, swallowed two glasses of whiskey, which he had provided for himself in advance, and only then felt himself ready to commit the deed.

Nine-tenths of the crimes are committed in this manner, — "To brace myself I will take a drink!"

Half the falls of women take place under the influence of wine. Nearly all the visits to lewd houses are made in a drunken condition. Men know this property of wine to drown the voice of conscience, and consciously use it for this purpose.

Not only do men intoxicate themselves in order to drown their conscience, — knowing the action of wine, they, with the intention of compelling other people to commit acts which are contrary to conscience, purposely get them intoxicated, organize the intoxication of men, in order to deprive them of their conscience. In a war soldiers are always made drunk, when it becomes necessary to fight a hand-to-hand fight. All the French soldiers were at the stormings of Sevastopol made drunk.

Everybody knows of men who have become insensibly drunk in consequence of crimes which tormented their conscience. Everybody may observe that men who live immorally more than any other are prone to use intoxicating substances. Gangs of robbers and thieves, and prostitutes do not live without liquor.

All know and recognize the fact that the use of intoxicating substances is the consequence of bites of conscience, that in certain immoral professions intoxicating substances are used for the sake of drowning one's conscience. All know also and recognize the fact that the use of intoxicating substances drowns the conscience, that a drunken man is capable of acts which he would not have the courage to think of in his sober state. All agree to this, but, — strange to say, — when in consequence of the use of intoxicating substances there do not appear such acts

as murder, violence, and so forth; when intoxicating substances are not taken as the result of some terrible crimes, but by men of professions that are not considered by us to be criminal, and when these substances are not taken at once in a great quantity, but constantly in moderate quantities, — it is for some reason assumed that the intoxicating substances no longer act upon the conscience, drowning it.

Thus it is assumed that the daily drinking by every well-to-do Russian of a glass of vódka before each meal and of a glass of wine after it, by a Frenchman of his absinthe, by the Englishman of his port and porter, by a German of his beer, by a well-to-do Chinaman the smoking of his moderate amount of opium, and the smoking of tobacco, is done only for pleasure and by no means affects men's consciences.

It is assumed that, if after this customary intoxication no crime has been committed, no theft, no murder, but certain stupid and bad acts, these acts have come of themselves, and were not provoked by the intoxication. It is assumed that if no capital crime has been committed by these men, they have no reason to drown their conscience, and that the life led by the men who abandon themselves to constant intoxication is absolutely good, and would be just as good if the people did not become intoxicated. It is assumed that the constant use of intoxicating substances in no way obscures their conscience.

Although everybody knows by experience that the mood changes from the use of wine and tobacco; that what without a stimulus would make a person feel ashamed now no longer causes shame; that after each ever so small bite of conscience a man is attracted to some kind of intoxication; that under the influence of intoxicating substances it is hard to reflect upon one's life and condition, and that the constant, regular use of intoxicating substances produces the same physiological effect as a single immoderate

use of it,—it seems to moderate drinkers and smokers that they do not at all use the intoxicating substances for the purpose of drowning their conscience, but only because they taste good and give pleasure.

But a man need but seriously and impassionately think of this, without excluding himself, in order to understand that, in the first place, if the use of intoxicating substances at one time in large quantities drowns man's conscience, the constant use of these substances must produce the same effect, because the intoxicating substances always act physiologically in the same way, always exciting and then dulling the activity of the brain, whether they be taken in large or in small doses; in the second place, that if the intoxicating substances have the property of drowning the conscience, they have this property at all times, both when under their influence a murder, a theft, an act of violence is committed, and when under their influence a word is said which would not be said without them, and people think and feel as they have not thought or felt before; and, in the third place, that if the use of intoxicating substances is necessary for thieves, robbers, prostitutes, in order to drown their consciences, it is just as indispensable to people who busy themselves with professions which are condemned by their consciences, even though these professions may be considered lawful and honourable by other people.

In short, it is impossible to avoid seeing that the use of intoxicating substances in large or small quantities, periodically or constantly, in the higher or in the lower circles, is provoked by one and the same cause,—the necessity of drowning the voice of conscience, in order that the discord between life and the demands of conscience may not be seen.

III.

In this alone lies the cause of the diffusion of all intoxicating substances and, among others, of tobacco, almost the most widely diffused and the most harmful of all.

It is assumed that tobacco cheers one up, clarifies one's thoughts, attracts people toward itself like any other habit, without ever producing that effect of drowning the conscience, which is recognized in the case of wine. But one need but look more attentively at the conditions in which a special necessity for smoking is manifested, in order to become convinced that the intoxication by means of tobacco, like that by means of wine, acts upon the conscience, and that men consciously have recourse to this intoxication, especially when they need it for this purpose. If tobacco merely cheered one up and clarified one's thoughts, there would not be this passionate need of it, particularly in certain definite cases, and people would not say that they would prefer to be without bread than without tobacco, and would not often actually prefer smoking to food.

That cook who cut his lady's throat said that, as he entered the lady's sleeping-room and cut her throat with a knife and she fell down with a râle and the blood burst forth in a stream, he lost courage. "I could not finish her up," he said, "and I went out of the sleeping-room into the sitting-room, where I sat down and smoked a cigarette." Only after he had intoxicated himself with tobacco, did he feel sufficient strength to return to the

sleeping-room, where he finished up the old lady and rummaged through her things.

Apparently the necessity for smoking was at that moment evoked in him, not by the desire to clarify his thoughts or cheer himself up, but by the demand for drowning that which kept him from accomplishing what he had undertaken to do.

Every smoker may observe in himself this definite necessity for intoxicating himself with tobacco at certain difficult moments. I remember when it was during the period of my smoking that I used to feel a special necessity for tobacco. This was always in such minutes when I was anxious not to remember what I did remember, when I wanted to forget, not to think. I am sitting alone, doing nothing, and I know that I must begin to work, but I do not feel like working. I smoke a cigarette, and continue to sit. I promised somebody to call on him at five o'clock, and I have stayed too long in another place; I recall that I am late, but I do not want to think of it, — so I smoke. I am excited, and I tell a man a lot of disagreeable things, and I know that I am doing wrong, and I see that it is time to stop, but I want to give vent to my excitability, and I smoke and continue to excite myself. I play cards and lose more than I intended to limit myself to, — and I smoke. I have placed myself in an awkward situation, I have acted badly, have made a mistake, and I must recognize my situation, in order that I may get out of it, but I do not wish to recognize it, — so I accuse others, and I smoke. I write and am not quite satisfied with what I write. I ought to give it up, but I want to finish writing what I have planned, — I smoke. I quarrel, and I see that my adversary and I do not understand and cannot understand one another; but I want to express my thoughts, — I continue to talk, and I smoke.

The peculiarity of tobacco, as compared with other intoxicating substances, besides the ease with which one

is intoxicated by it and besides its apparent harmlessness, consists also in its portativeness, so to speak, in the possibility of applying it to small, separate cases. To say nothing of the fact that the use of opium, wine, hashish, is connected with certain appliances which one cannot always have, while one can always carry about tobacco and paper, and that the smoker of opium, the alcoholic, excite horror, while a tobacco smoker does not represent anything repulsive, the superiority of tobacco over other intoxicants is this, that the intoxication from opium, hashish, wine, covers all impressions and actions received and produced during a certain sufficiently long period of time, while the intoxication from tobacco may be directed to every separate occasion. You want to do what ought not to be done, so you smoke a cigarette, you become intoxicated to the extent you wish to be, in order that you may do what ought not to be done, and you are again fresh, and you can think and speak clearly; or you feel that you have done what ought not to be done, — again a cigarette, and the unpleasant consciousness of a bad or awkward act is destroyed, and you can busy yourself with something else.

But, to say nothing of those individual cases in which every smoker has recourse to smoking, not as to a gratification of a habit and a pastime, but as to a means for drowning the conscience in the case of acts which are to be committed or have already been committed, — can one fail to observe that strict, definite interdependence between the manner of life of people and their bias for smoking?

When do boys begin to smoke? Almost always when they begin to lose their child innocence. Why can smokers stop smoking the moment they get into more moral conditions of life, and begin to smoke again the moment they fall into a corrupt sphere? Why do almost all gamblers smoke? Why do women who lead a regular

mode of life smoke least of all women? Why do *all* prostitutes and insane persons smoke? Deducing what is due to habit, it is evident that smoking stands in a definite relation to the demand for drowning the conscience, and that it attains this aim.

The observation as to what extent smoking drowns the voice of conscience may be made on almost any smoker. Every smoker, in surrendering himself to his passion, forgets or neglects the very first demands of social life, which he demands from others and which he observes in all other cases, so long as his conscience is not drowned by tobacco. Every man of our medium degree of education regards it as impermissible, rude, and inhuman for his own pleasure to impair the quiet and the comfort, and much more the health, of other people. Nobody will permit himself to wet a room in which people are sitting, to be noisy, yell, to let in cold, hot, or foul air, to commit acts which interfere with others or harm them. But out of one thousand smokers not one will feel any embarrassment at filling with foul air a room, the air of which non-smoking women and children breathe. Even though smokers usually ask the persons present, "Does it incommode you?" all know that these persons are supposed to answer, "Not in the least" (although it cannot be agreeable for a non-smoker to breathe the infected air and to find ill-smelling stubs in glasses, cups, plates, on candlesticks, or even in ash-trays). But even if adult non-smokers were able to endure the tobacco, this can in no way be agreeable and useful to children, whose permission nobody asks. And yet honourable people, who are humane in every other respect, smoke in the presence of children, at dinner, in small rooms, infecting the air with the tobacco smoke, without feeling therewith the least scruples.

People generally say, and I used to say so, that smoking contributes to mental work. This is unquestionably

so, if one considers the amount of mental work. A smoker, who therefore has ceased to value strictly or to weigh his thoughts, imagines that a mass of ideas has suddenly come to him. But this does not mean at all that he has acquired a mass of thoughts, but only that he has lost control over his thoughts.

When a man works, he always recognizes two beings in himself: one — the worker, the other — the one who puts a value on the work. The stricter the valuation, the slower and the better is the work, and vice versa. But if the valuator is under the influence of intoxication, there will be more work, but its quality will be lowered.

"If I do not smoke, I shall not be able to write. Thoughts do not come to me; I begin writing, and I cannot go on," people generally say, and so did I say. What does this mean? Either that you have nothing to write about, or that what you wish to write about has not yet matured in your consciousness, but only begins to present itself dimly to you, and the appraising critic, who lives in you and is not intoxicated by tobacco, tells you so. If you did not smoke, you would give up what you have begun, and would wait for the time when what you are thinking about has become clear to you, or you would try to think out what dimly presents itself to you, or you would consider the objections that have arisen and would strain all your attention to elucidate your thoughts. But you light a cigarette, the critic within you is intoxicated, and the impediment to your work is removed: what to you, sober from tobacco, has seemed insignificant again presents itself as significant; what has seemed obscure no longer appears as such; the objections that arose before you have disappeared, and you continue to write, and write much and fast.

IV.

"But is it possible that such a small, such a tiny change as a slight intoxication, produced by a moderate use of wine and tobacco, can produce any important consequences? Of course, if a man fills himself with opium or hashish, or with wine, so that he falls and loses his reason, the consequences of such an intoxication may be very serious; but a man's being under a very slight influence of liquor or tobacco can in no way have any serious consequences," people generally say. It seems to people that a slight intoxication, a slight dimming of one's conscience, cannot produce any serious results. But to think thus is the same as to think that it may hurt a watch to strike it against the stone, but that sand getting into the middle of its mechanism cannot hurt it.

The chief work, which moves all human life, does not take place in the motion of human hands, feet, spines, but in the consciousness. For a man to do anything with his feet and hands, it is necessary first for a certain change to take place in the consciousness. And this change determines all the subsequent actions of a man. But these changes are always very small, almost imperceptible.

Bryúllov corrected the study of one of his students. As the student looked at the changed study, he said: "You barely touched the study, and it is entirely changed." Bryúllov answered, "Art begins only where the *barely* begins."

This utterance is strikingly correct, and not merely in relation to art, but also to life. It may be said that true life begins where the barely begins, where the infinitely

small changes that are barely perceptible to us begin. The true life does not take place where great external changes occur, where people change places, conflict, fight, kill one another, but only where barely perceptible, differential changes occur.

Raskólnikov's true life did not take place when he killed the old woman and her sister. As he killed the old woman herself, and especially her sister, he did not live his true life, but acted like a machine, — he did what he could not help doing: he exploded the charge with which he had long been loaded. One old woman was dead, another lay before him, the axe was in his hand.

Raskólnikov's true life did not take place when he met the old woman's sister, but when he had not yet killed one old woman; when he had not yet been in a strange apartment with the purpose of killing; when he did not have the axe in his hand; when he did not have the noose in his overcoat, to hang the axe in; when he did not even have the old woman in his mind, and, lying on his sofa, did not even reflect on the old woman and whether it was right, or not, by the will of one person to wipe another useless and harmful man from the face of the earth, but reflected whether he ought to live in St. Petersburg or not, whether he ought to take money from his mother, and on other questions which had nothing to do with the old woman. It was, then, in this sphere which was independent of the vital activity that the questions were answered as to whether he would kill the old woman or not. The questions were not decided when he, having killed one old woman, was standing with the axe before the other woman, but when he was not acting, but only thinking, when nothing but his consciousness worked and in this consciousness were taking place barely perceptible changes. It is then that for the regular solution of the rising question the greatest clearness of thought is of

especial importance, and then one glass of beer, one cigarette may interfere with the solution of the question, may put off the solution, may drown the voice of conscience and contribute to the solution of the question in favour of the lower animal nature, as was the case with Raskólnikov.

The changes are barely perceptible, but from them come the most enormous, most terrible consequences. From what will happen when a man has made up his mind and has begun to act, many material things may change, houses, wealth, men's bodies may be ruined, but there can happen nothing more than what has lodged itself in man's consciousness. The limits of what may happen are given by the consciousness.

But from barely perceptible changes, which take place in the sphere of consciousness, there may happen the most unexpected and most significant consequences, for which there are no limits.

Let no one think that what I say has anything in common with the questions about the freedom of the will, or determinism. Discussions about these subjects are superfluous for my purpose, or for any other purpose. Without solving the question whether a man can act as he wants to (a question which, in my opinion, is not correctly put), I speak only of this, that, as the human activity is determined by barely perceptible changes in the consciousness (no matter whether the so-called freedom of the will is assumed or not), it is necessary to be particularly attentive to that state in which these barely perceptible changes take place, as one has to be particularly attentive to the condition of the scales by means of which we weigh objects. We must, in so far as this depends upon us, try to put ourselves and others under conditions in which the clearness and delicacy of thought which are indispensable for the regular work of the consciousness will not be impaired, and not act in a contrary

way, by trying to encumber and confuse this work of the consciousness by the use of intoxicating substances.

A man is both a spiritual and an animal being. A man can be moved by acting upon his spiritual being, and he may be moved by acting on his animal existence, — even as a watch may be moved through the hand or through the chief wheel. And as it is more advantageous to guide the motion through the inner mechanism, so it is more advantageous to move a man — oneself or another — through the consciousness. And as in a watch we must take the best care of what most advantageously moves the inner mechanism, so we must in man look after the purity, the clearness of the consciousness, by means of which it is most advantageous to move a man. It is impossible to have any doubts about this, and all men know it. But there appears the necessity for deceiving oneself. People do not wish so much that their consciousness should work regularly, as that it should seem to them that what they are doing is regular, and they consciously use such substances as impair the regular working of the consciousness.

V.

PEOPLE drink and smoke, not for no reason, not from tedium, not for pleasure, because it is agreeable, but in order to drown their consciences. And if this is so, how terrible must the consequences be! Indeed, imagine what the building would be which men would not build with a solid level, to straighten the walls, nor with a T square, to measure the angles, but with a soft level which would adapt itself to all the inequalities in the wall, and with a square which would be adjustable and adaptable to any acute or obtuse angle.

And yet, thanks to the self-intoxication, this very thing is being done in life. Life does not agree with the conscience, and so the conscience is made to bend to life.

This is being done in the lives of separate individuals; this is also being done in the life of all humanity, which is composed of the lives of individuals.

In order fully to understand the whole significance of such intoxication of one's consciousness, let every man well recall his spiritual condition at every period of his life. Every man will find that at every period of his life there stood before him certain moral questions, which he had to solve, and on the solution of which depended the whole good of his life. For the solution of these questions a great straining of the attention is necessary. This straining of the attention is labour. But in every labour, especially in its beginning, there is a period when the labour appears difficult and agonizing, and human weakness urges the desire to drop it. Physical labour appears

tormenting in its beginning; still more tormenting is mental labour. As Lessing says, men have the property of ceasing to think when the thinking begins to present difficulties, and, I shall add, especially when the thinking begins to be fruitful. A man feels that the solution of questions before him demands strained, frequently agonizing labour, and he feels like rejecting it. If he did not have any internal means for intoxicating himself, he would not be able to expel from his consciousness the questions which arise before him, and he would involuntarily be led to the necessity of solving them. The moment questions that are subject to solution begin to torment a man, he has recourse to these means and saves himself from the unrest which is evoked by the agitating questions. The consciousness stops asking for a solution of them, and the unsolved questions remain unsolved until the next enlightenment. But at the next enlightenment the same is repeated, and a man for months, and years, and often during his whole life, continues to stand before the same moral questions, without moving a step toward their solution. And yet it is in the solution of the moral questions that the whole motion of life consists.

What takes place is like what a man would do, who has to look through roiled water to the bottom, in order to get out of it a costly pearl, and who, not wishing to enter into the water, should consciously roil the water, as soon as it began to settle and become transparent. During a whole life a man who intoxicates himself frequently stands motionless on the same once acquired, obscure, contradictory world-conception, at every successive period of enlightenment pressing against the same wall against which he pressed ten or twenty years ago, and which he cannot break down because he consciously dulls that acumen of thought which alone could break through it.

Let each man recall for himself that period during

which he has been drinking and smoking, and let him verify the same on others, and he will see one constant feature which distinguishes people who surrender themselves to intoxication from people who are free from it: the more a man is subject to intoxication, the more he is morally immobile.

VI.

THE consequences of the use of opium and hashish, as described to us, are terrible for individual persons; terrible are the familiar consequences from the use of alcohol by confirmed drunkards; but incomparably more terrible are the consequences for the whole of society which result from that moderate use of whiskey, wine, beer, and tobacco, which is considered harmless, and to which the majority of men are subject, especially the so-called cultured classes of our world. These consequences must be terrible, if we recognize, what we cannot help recognizing, that the guiding activities of society — the political, official, scientific, literary, artistic activities — are produced for the most part by men who are in an abnormal state, by drunken men. It is generally assumed that a man, who, like the majority of the men of our well-to-do classes, uses alcoholic drinks every time he partakes of food, on the following day, during the period of his work, is in an absolutely normal and sober state. But this is quite untrue. A man who on the day before has drunk a bottle of wine, a glass of whiskey, or two mugs of beer, finds himself in the usual condition of intoxication or oppression which follows upon the excitation, and so in a mentally depressed state, which is intensified through smoking. For a man who smokes and drinks constantly and moderately, to bring his brain into a normal state, he must pass at least a week without the use of wine or of tobacco.[1] But this can hardly ever be.

[1] But why are people who do not drink or smoke frequently on an infinitely lower mental and moral level than those who drink and

Thus the greater part of what is being done in our world, — by men who guide and instruct others, and by men who are guided and instructed, — is not done in a sober state.

Let not any one take this as a joke or exaggeration: the monstrousness and, above all, the senselessness of our life is chiefly due to the constant state of intoxication, which the majority of men induce in themselves. Is it possible that people who are sober would calmly do all that is done in our world, — from the Eiffel Tower to the universal military service? Without any necessity whatsoever a society is formed, capital is collected, plans are formed; millions of work-days, of pounds of iron, are wasted on the construction of a tower; and millions of people consider it their duty to climb on this tower, to stay on it, and to come down again; and the construction of this tower and the visit to it do not evoke in men any other judgment than the desire and intention of building elsewhere higher towers still. Could sober people do this? Or another thing: all the European nations have for decades been busy inventing the best means for killing people and instructing all young men who have reached

smoke? And why do drinkers and smokers frequently manifest the highest mental and spiritual qualities?

The answer to this is, in the first place, that we do not know the height which the drinkers and smokers would have reached if they had not drunk or smoked. But from this, that spiritually strong men, subjecting themselves to the debasing influence of intoxicating substances, have none the less produced great things, we can only conclude that they would have produced even greater things if they had not been subject to intoxications. It is very likely, as an acquaintance of mine told me, that Kant's books would not have been written in so strange and bad a language if he had not smoked so much. In the second place, we must not forget that the lower a man stands mentally and morally, the less does he feel the discord between consciousness and life, and so the less he experiences the necessity for intoxication, and that therefore it happens so frequently that the most sensitive natures, those who morbidly feel the discord between life and conscience, are addicted to the use of narcotics, from which they perish. — *Author's Note.*

maturity to commit murder. All know that there can be no incursions of barbarians, that the preparations for murder are directed against each other by civilized Christian nations; all know that this is hard, painful, inconvenient, destructive, immoral, godless, and senseless, — and all prepare themselves for mutual murder: some, by inventing political combinations as to who shall be in alliance with whom and who is to be killed, others, by commanding those who are being prepared to commit murder, and others again, by submitting, against their will, against their conscience, against reason, to these preparations for murder. Could sober men have done this? Only drunkards, men who have never sobered down, could have committed these deeds and could live in this terrible contradiction of life and conscience in which the men of our world live, not only in this respect, but in many other respects as well.

Never, it seems to me, have men lived in such evident contradiction between the demands of their conscience and their acts.

The humanity of our time seems to have caught in something. It is as though there were some external cause which kept it from taking up a position which is proper for it according to its consciousness. And this cause — if not the only one, it is the most important — is that physical condition of stupefaction, which the great majority of the men of our world induce in themselves by means of wine and tobacco.

The liberation from this terrible evil will be an epoch in the life of humanity, and this epoch, it seems, is at hand. The evil has been recognized. The change in the consciousness in relation to the use of intoxicating substances has already taken place, people have come to understand their terrible harm and begin to point it out, and this imperceptible change in the consciousness will inevitably bring with it the liberation of men from the use of

intoxicating substances. But the liberation of men from the use of intoxicating substances will open their eyes to the demands of their conscience, and they will begin to pass their lives in accord with their conscience.

And it seems to me that this is already beginning. And, as always, it begins in the higher classes, when all the lower classes are already infected.

THE FIRST STEP

1892

THE FIRST STEP

I.

When a man does a thing, not for the sake of appearances, but with a desire to accomplish something, he inevitably acts in a certain consecutive manner, which is determined by the essence of the matter. If a man does later what by the essence of the case ought to have been done before, or entirely omits what ought necessarily to be done, in order that he may be able to continue the work, he certainly does not do it seriously, but is only pretending. This rule remains unchangeably true in material as well as in immaterial affairs. As it is impossible seriously to wish to bake bread without having first mixed the flour, and then made a fire, and then swept the oven, and so forth, so it is impossible seriously to wish to lead a good life without observing a certain consecutiveness in the acquirement of the qualities which are necessary for it.

This rule in matters of a good life is especially important, because in a material matter, as, for example, in the baking of bread, it is possible to find out whether a man is seriously busying himself with the matter, or whether he is only pretending, by judging from the results of his activity; but in the leading of a good life this verification is impossible. When people, without mixing the flour and making a fire in the oven, pretend

that they are baking bread, as in the theatre, it is evident to every one from the consequences, the absence of bread, that they only pretended; but when a man only makes it appear that he is leading a good life, we have no such direct indications, from which it would be possible to find out whether he is seriously striving after living a good life, or whether he is only pretending, because the consequences of a good life are not only not always apparent and palpable for the people surrounding him, but frequently even appear harmful to them; and the respect and the acknowledgment of usefulness and pleasure for his contemporaries do not prove anything in favour of the actuality of his good life.

And so, to distinguish the actuality of a good life from its appearances, we have a very precious symptom, which consists in the regular consecutiveness of the acquisition of properties necessary for a good life. This symptom is particularly precious, not in order to find out the veracity of the striving after a good life in others, but in order to find it out in ourselves, because in this respect we are inclined to deceive ourselves more than others.

The correct consecutiveness of the acquisition of good qualities is an indispensable condition of the motion toward a good life, and all the teachers of humanity have always prescribed to men a certain invariable consecutiveness in the acquisition of good qualities.

In all the moral teachings there is established that ladder which, as Chinese wisdom says, extends from earth to heaven, and which cannot be ascended except by beginning with the lowest rung. As in the teachings of the Brahmins, Buddhists, Confucianists, so also in the teaching of the sages of Greece, there are established degrees of virtues, and the higher cannot be attained before the lower has been acquired. All the moral teachers of humanity, both the religious and the non-religious, have recognized the necessity of a definite consecutiveness in

the attainment of the virtues necessary for a good life; this necessity arises from the very essence of the thing, and so, one would think, ought to be acknowledged by all men.

But, strange to say, the consciousness of the necessary consecutiveness of the qualities and actions essential for a good life is, it seems, more and more lost sight of and remains only in the ascetic, monastic societies. In the society of worldly men it is assumed and recognized that it is possible to attain the highest qualities of a good life not only with an absence of the lower good qualities, which condition the higher, but also with the broadest development of vices; in consequence of which the conception as to what the good life consists in has in our time become exceedingly mixed in the society of the majority of worldly men. We have lost the concept of what constitutes a good life.

II.

THIS happened, I think, in the following manner:

Christianity, in taking the place of paganism, put forth more elevated moral demands than were those of the pagans, and, as could not have been otherwise, in putting forth its demands, established, as in the pagan morality, one necessary consecutiveness in the attainment of the virtues, or in the degrees for the attainment of a good life.

Plato's virtues, beginning with continence, through manliness and wisdom attained to justice; the Christian virtues, beginning with self-renunciation, through devotion to God's will attain to love.

The men who seriously accepted Christianity, and strove to make the good Christian life their own, understood Christianity in this sense, and always began the good life with the renunciation of their lusts, which included the pagan continence.

The Christian teaching took the place of the pagan for the very reason that it is different from and higher than the pagan. But the Christian teaching, like the pagan, leads men to truth and to the good; and since truth and the good are always one, the path leading to them must be one, and the first steps on this path must inevitably be one and the same for a Christian as for a pagan.

The difference between the Christian and the pagan teaching of the good consists in this, that the pagan teaching is the teaching of a finite perfection, while the Christian is that of an infinite perfection. Plato, for example, makes justice a model of perfection; but Christ makes a

model of the infinite perfection of love. "Be ye as perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." From this follow the different relations of the pagan and the Christian teachings to the various degrees of the virtues. The attainment of the highest virtue according to the pagan teaching is possible, and every step of attainment has its relative significance: the higher the step, the greater the desert, so that men, from the pagan point of view, are divided into virtuous and unvirtuous, into more or less virtuous. But according to the Christian teaching, which pointed out the infinitude of perfection, all steps are equal among themselves in relation to the infinite ideal. The difference of the deserts in paganism consists in the step which has been attained by a man; in Christianity the deserts consist only in the process of attainment, in the greater or lesser celerity of motion. From the pagan point of view, a man who is in possession of the virtue of reflection stands in the moral sense higher than a man who does not possess this virtue; a man who in addition to reflection is also in possession of bravery stands higher still; a man who is in possession of reflection and of bravery, and, besides, of justice, stands higher still; but a Christian can be regarded neither as the one, nor as higher, nor as lower in the moral sense; a Christian is the more a Christian the faster he moves toward the infinite perfection, independently of the step on which he is standing at a given minute. Thus the immovable righteousness of the Pharisee is lower than the motion of the repentant thief on the cross.

But there can be no difference in this, that the motion toward virtue, toward perfection, cannot take place by avoiding the lower steps of virtue, either in paganism or in Christianity.

A Christian, like a pagan, cannot do otherwise than begin the work of perfection from the very beginning, that is, where the pagan begins it, with abstinence, just as he

who ascends a staircase must begin with the first step. The only difference is this, that for the pagan abstinence in itself presents itself as a virtue, while for a Christian abstinence is only a part of self-renunciation, which forms a necessary condition of a striving after perfection. And so true Christianity in its manifestation could not reject the virtues which even paganism pointed out.

But not all men understood Christianity as a striving after the perfection of the Father in heaven; Christianity, falsely understood, destroyed the sincerity and seriousness of the relation of men to its teaching.

If a man believes that he may be saved, even though he does not fulfil the moral teaching of Christianity, it is natural for him to think that his efforts to be good are superfluous. And so a man who believes that there are means for salvation other than the personal efforts for attaining perfection (as, for example, the indulgences of the Catholics) cannot strive after it with the same energy and seriousness with which a man strives who does not know any other means than those of personal efforts. But, not striving after this with complete seriousness, and knowing other means than those of personal efforts, a man will inevitably neglect the one invariable order, in which may be acquired the good qualities which are necessary for a good life. This same thing has happened with the majority of men who in an external manner profess Christianity.

III.

THE teaching that personal efforts are not needed for a man to attain spiritual perfection, but that there are other means, appears as the cause of weakening of the striving after a good life and of the departure from the consecutiveness indispensable for a good life.

An immense mass of people, who accepted Christianity only in an external manner, took advantage of the substitution of Christianity for paganism, in order, by freeing themselves from the demands of the pagan virtues, as no longer of any use to a Christian, to free themselves from every necessity of a struggle with their animal nature.

The same was done by the men who stopped believing in the external Christianity alone. Like those other believers, they in place of the external Christianity put forth some imaginary good work, accepted by the majority, such as serving science, art, humanity, — and in the name of this imaginary good work freed themselves from the consecutiveness of attaining the qualities which are necessary for a good life, and were satisfied with pretending, as in the theatre, that they were living a good life.

Such men, who have fallen away from paganism and have not joined Christianity in its true meaning, began to preach love of God and of men without self-renunciation, and justice without abstinence, that is, the higher virtues without the attainment of the lower, that is, not the virtues themselves, but only their semblance.

Some preach the love of God and men without self-renunciation, others — humanitarianism, serving men and humanity without abstinence.

And since this advocacy encourages man's animal nature under the guise of introducing him into the higher moral spheres, by freeing him from the most elementary demands of morality, which have long ago been expressed by the pagans, and which have not only not been rejected, but have been accentuated by true Christianity, it was readily accepted, both by the believers and by the non-believers.

Only the other day there was published the Pope's encyclical in regard to socialism. After rejecting the opinion of the socialists as to the illegality of ownership, it says there that "no one is certainly obliged to help his neighbour by taking from what he needs for himself or for his family (*nul assurément n'est tenu de soulager le prochain en prenant sur son nécessaire ou sur celui de sa famille*), nor even to diminish anything of what the proprieties demand of him. No one must, indeed, live contrary to custom." (This place is taken out of St. Thomas: *Nullus enim inconvenienter debet vivere.*) "But after the due has been given to what one needs and to external proprieties," the encyclical continues, "it is the duty of every man to give the surplus to the poor."

Thus preaches the chief of one of the most wide-spread churches of the present time. And side by side with this sermon on egoism, which prescribes giving to our neighbour what we do not need, love is preached, and they constantly adduce with pathos the famous words of Paul, from the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, about love.

In spite of the fact that the whole teaching of the Gospel is filled with demands for self-renunciation and indications that self-renunciation is the first condition of Christian perfection; in spite of such clear utterances, as, "He that shall not take up his cross, he that shall not forsake father and mother, he that shall not lose his life," people assure themselves and others that it is possible to love men, without renouncing not only what they have

become used to, but even that which they themselves consider to be proper.

Thus speak the false Christians, and precisely in the same way think and speak and write and act the people who reject not only the external, but also the true Christian teaching, — the freethinkers. These people assure themselves and others that, without diminishing their necessities, without vanquishing their passions, they can serve men and humanity, that is, lead a good life.

Men have rejected the pagan consecutiveness of the virtues and, without adopting the Christian teaching in its true significance, have not accepted even the Christian consecutiveness and have remained without any guide whatsoever.

IV.

ANCIENTLY, when there was no Christian teaching, all the teachers of life, beginning with Socrates, had abstinence — *ἐγκράτεια* and *σωφροσύνη* — for their first virtue of life, and it was understood that every virtue must begin with it and pass through it. It was clear that a man who did not control himself, who developed in himself an immense number of passions, and who submitted to them all, could not lead a good life. It was clear that before a man could think, not only of magnanimity, of love, but also of unselfishness, of justice, he must learn to control himself. But according to our views nothing of the kind is needed. We are fully convinced that a man who has developed his passions to the highest degree to which they are developed in our society, a man who cannot live without gratifying hundreds of habits which have taken possession of him, may be able to live an absolutely moral, good life.

In our time and in our society the tendency toward limiting one's passions is considered not only not the first, but not even the last act for leading a good life; it is considered to be absolutely unnecessary.

According to the now ruling, universal, contemporary teaching about life, the increase of necessities is, on the contrary, regarded as a desirable quality, a sign of development, civilization, culture, and perfection. The so-called cultured people consider the habits of comfort, that is, of effeminacy, not only not harmful, but even good, in that they show a certain moral elevation of man, almost a virtue.

The more needs there are, the more refined these needs are, the better this is considered to be.

Nothing shows this so clearly as the descriptive poetry and especially the novels of the past and the present centuries.

How are the heroes and heroines depicted, who represent the ideals of virtues?

In the majority of cases, the men who are supposed to represent something elevated and noble, beginning with Childe Harold and ending with the latest heroes of Feuillet, Trollope, Maupassant, are nothing but corrupt drones, who are of no use to any one; and the heroines are mistresses, just as idle and given to luxury, who in one way or another afford more or less enjoyment to the men.

I am not speaking of the few rare cases in literature, where abstinent, labouring persons are actually described, — I am speaking of the usual type, which forms the ideal of the masses, of that person whom the majority of men and women try to resemble most. I remember, when I wrote novels, the inexplicable difficulty in which I found myself and with which I struggled, and with which, I know, struggle all the novelists who have even the dimmest consciousness of what constitutes moral beauty, consisted in representing the type of a worldly man that would be ideally good and at the same time true to reality.

V.

An indubitable proof that the men of our time really fail to recognize that the pagan abstinence and the Christian self-renunciation are desirable and good qualities, but consider the increase of the needs as something good and exalted, may be found in the way the children of our class of society are brought up in the vast majority of cases. They are not only not taught abstinence, as was the case with the pagans, or self-renunciation, as it ought to be with Christians, but they are consciously inoculated with habits of effeminacy, physical idleness, and luxury.

I have for a long time had in mind writing a fairy-tale of the following kind: a woman, wishing to avenge herself on another woman by whom she has been insulted, seizes her enemy's child, and goes to a wizard, whom she asks to teach her how she may take the bitterest revenge on her enemy through her enemy's only child, which she has kidnapped. The wizard instructs the kidnapper to take the child to a place indicated by him, assuring her that the revenge will be most terrible. The evil woman does so, but she watches the child, and to her amazement sees that the child is taken up and adopted by a childless rich man. She goes to the wizard and rebukes him, but the wizard begs her to wait. The child grows up in luxury and effeminacy. The evil woman is perplexed, but the wizard asks her to wait longer. And, indeed, the time arrives when the evil woman is satisfied and even takes pity on the victim. The child grows up in effeminacy and looseness of manners, and, thanks to his good

character, is ruined. Here begins a series of physical sufferings, wretchedness, and humiliations, toward which he is particularly sensitive and with which he does not know how to struggle. The striving after a moral life, and the impotence of the effeminate flesh which is accustomed to luxury and to idleness. A vain struggle, a fall lower and lower, drunkenness, to forget himself, and crime, or insanity, or suicide.

Indeed, it is not possible without horror to view the education of certain children in our time. Only the meanest foe could so carefully inoculate the child with those weaknesses and vices, with which he is inoculated by his parents, especially by his mother. One is horrified as one sees all this, and still more, the consequences of this, if it is possible to see what is going on in the souls of the best of these children who are with such care ruined by their parents. They are inoculated with the habits of effeminacy; they are inoculated with them, when the young being does not yet understand their moral significance. Not only is the habit of abstinence and self-possession destroyed, but, contrary to what was done in education in Sparta and in the ancient world in general, this ability is absolutely atrophied. A man is not only not taught to labour, to undergo all the conditions of every fruitful labour, concentrated attention, tension, endurance, preoccupation with the work, the knowledge of mending what is spoiled, the habit of fatigue, the joy of accomplishment, but he is taught idleness and contempt for every product of labour; he is taught to spoil, throw away, and again for money to acquire what he pleases, without giving any thought to how things are made. A man is deprived of the ability to attain the virtue first in order, which is indispensable for the attainment of all the rest, — reflection, — and is let out into the world, in which are preached and, it is assumed, valued the high virtues of justice, service

of men, love. It is all very well if the young man has a morally weak nature, which is not sensitive, which does not feel the difference between a good life for show and a real good life, and which can be satisfied with the evil existing in life. If so, everything seems to arrange itself properly, and with an unawakened moral sentiment such a man at times calmly lives to his grave.

But this is not always the case, especially of late, when the consciousness of the immorality of such a life is in the air and involuntarily falls deep into the heart. Frequently, and ever more frequently, it happens that the demands of the true, not the seeming morality are awakened, and then begin an internal agonizing struggle and suffering, which rarely end with the victory of the moral feeling. A man feels that his life is bad and that he must change it all from the very beginning, and he endeavours to do so; but here other people, who have passed through the same struggle and who have not come out victoriously, from all sides attack him who is trying to change his life, and try with every means at their command to impress upon him that this is not at all necessary, that abstinence and self-renunciation are not at all necessary in order to be good, that it is possible, though abandoning oneself to gluttony, love of attire, physical idleness, and even fornication, to be an absolutely good and useful man. And the struggle for the most part ends in a lamentable manner. Either the man, worn out by his weakness, submits to this universal voice and suppresses in himself the voice of conscience, compromises with his reason, in order to justify himself, and continues to lead the same life of dissipation, assuring himself that he redeems it with his belief in the external Christianity or with his service in the name of science, or of art; or he struggles, suffers, and loses his mind, or shoots himself. It happens but rarely that, amidst these temptations

which surround him, a man of our society understands what is, and thousands of years ago was, a rudimentary truth for all reasoning men, namely, that to attain a good life it is necessary first of all to stop living a bad life, and that to attain any higher virtues it is necessary first of all to attain the virtue of abstinence or self-possession, as the pagans defined it, or the virtue of self-renunciation, as Christianity defines it, and by degrees, making efforts over himself, attains it.

VI.

I HAVE just read the letters of our highly cultured representative man of the forties, the exile Ogarév, to another, even more highly cultured and gifted man, Herzen. In these letters Ogarév expresses his intimate thoughts, and puts forth his highest strivings, and one cannot help but see that he, as is characteristic of a young man, is posing before his friend. He speaks of self-perfection, of sacred friendship, of love, of serving science, humanity, and so forth. And at the same time he writes in a calm tone that he frequently irritates his friend, with whom he is living, because, as he writes, "I return in an intoxicated state, or disappear for long hours with a fallen, but dear creature." Apparently the remarkably sincere, gifted, cultured man could not even imagine that there was anything prejudicial in this, that he, a married man, awaiting the birth of a child (in the next letter he writes that his wife was delivered of a child), returned home drunk, disappearing among lewd women. It did not occur to him that, so long as he did not begin to struggle and did not curb his proneness to intoxication and to fornication, he had no business even to think of friendship, love, and, above all else, doing something in the service of anything. He not only failed to struggle against these vices, but apparently regarded them as something very charming, which did not in the least interfere with his striving after perfection, and so not only did not conceal them from his friend, before whom he wished to appear in the best light, but outright made a display of them.

Thus it was half a century ago. I found these men

still alive. I knew Ogarév himself, and Herzen, and the men of this calibre, and men educated in the same traditions. In all these men there was a striking absence of consecutiveness in matters of life. They all had a sincere, warm desire for the good, and an absolute laxity in their personal passions, which, it seemed to them, could not interfere with a good life and their production of good and even great works. They put unkneaded loaves into an unheated oven, and they believed that the loaves would be baked. When in their old age they began to notice that the loaves would not bake, that is, that no good had been accomplished by their lives, they saw in this something very tragical.

The tragedy of such a life is indeed very terrible. And this tragicalness, such as it was in the days of Herzen, Ogarév, and others, it exists even now for many, very many so-called cultured people of our time, who have retained the same views. A man strives to live a good life, but the indispensable consecutiveness, which is necessary for this, is lost in that society in which he lives. As was the case with Ogarév and Herzen fifty years ago, so the majority of modern men are convinced that living an effeminate life, eating sweet and fat food, enjoying oneself, in every way gratifying one's lust, does not interfere with a good life. But, apparently, the good life does not result in their case, and they surrender themselves to pessimism, saying, " Such is man's tragical position."

VII.

THE error that the men, in surrendering themselves to their lusts, in considering this lustful life to be good, are able with all that to lead a good, useful, just, loving life, is so startling that the men of future generations, I think, will absolutely fail to understand what these men of our time meant by the words "a good life," since they said that gluttons, effeminate, lustful men, lead a good life Indeed, we need but to renounce the habitual view of our life for a time and look upon it, I do not say from the standpoint of a Christian, but from the pagan standpoint, from the standpoint of the lowest demands of justice, in order to become convinced that there can be here no question of a good life.

Every man of our society must, I shall not say, to begin a new life, but only to start moving in it, above all else to stop leading a bad life, — he must begin to destroy those conditions of a bad life in which he finds himself.

How often we hear, in justification of our not changing our bad life, the reflection that an act which goes counter to the habitual life would be unnatural and ridiculous, or a desire to make a display, and so would be a bad act. This reflection seems to be made in order to prevent men from changing their bad life. If all our life were good and just, every act which is in accordance with the common life would be good. But if our life is half-good, half-bad, there is as much probability that every act which is not in accordance with the common life is good as that it is bad. But if the whole life is bad and irregular, a man who lives this life cannot perform a single good

act, without impairing the usual current of life. It is possible to perform a bad act without impairing the habitual current of life, but it is not possible to perform a good act.

A man who lives our life cannot lead a good life, before leaving those conditions of evil in which he finds himself; he cannot begin to do good, unless he has stopped doing evil. It is impossible for a man who lives luxuriously to lead a good life. All his attempts at doing good will be in vain, until he changes his life and does that work, first in order, which he has to do. A good life, according to the pagan world conception, and still more so according to the Christian, is measured by one thing, and cannot be measured by anything else but the relation, in the mathematical sense, of love of self to the love of others. The less there is of love of self and the resulting care for oneself and labours and demands from others for oneself, and the more there is of love for others and the resulting cares for others, of labours for others, the better the life is.

Thus all the sages of the world and all the true Christians have always understood the good life, and just so all the simplest people understand it. The more a man gives to others and the less he asks for himself, the better he is; the less he gives to others and the more he demands for himself, the worse he is.

If the point of support in a lever be moved from the long to the short end, then not only will the long end be lengthened, but the short end will also be shortened. Thus, if a man, having the one given ability of loving, increases the love and care for himself, he by this very fact diminishes the ability to love others and care for them, not only to the amount of love which he has transferred to himself, but many times more. Instead of feeding others, a man eats up more than is necessary, and thus he has not only diminished the possibility of giving

this abundance, but has also, in consequence of his gluttony, deprived himself of the possibility of caring for others.

To be able, not in words, but in fact, to love others, we must stop loving ourselves, not in words, but in fact. As a rule it happens like this: we think that we love others and assure ourselves and others of this fact; but we love in words only, while ourselves we love in fact. We shall forget to feed others and put them to bed, but ourselves never. And so, to love others, indeed, in fact, we must learn to forget to feed ourselves and put ourselves to bed, just as we forget to do so in reference to others.

We say, "a good man," and "leads a good life," about an effeminate man, who is used to a luxurious life. But such a person — be it man or woman — may have the loveliest traits of character, of meekness, kindness of heart, but he cannot lead a good life, as a knife of the very best workmanship and steel cannot cut, if it is not sharpened. To be good and to lead a good life means to give more to others than is received from them. But an effeminate man, who is used to a luxurious life, cannot do so, in the first place, because he himself always needs much (and he needs much, not on account of his egoism, but because he is used to it, and it causes him suffering to be deprived of what he is used to), and, in the second, because, using up everything which he receives from others, he by this very use weakens himself, deprives himself of the possibility of working, and so of serving others. An effeminate man, who sleeps softly and long, who eats fat, sweet food, and drinks in large quantities, who is dressed warmly or coolly, as the case may demand, who has not accustomed himself to the tension of work, can do but very little.

We have become so accustomed to lying to ourselves and to the lie of others, it is so convenient for us not to see the lie of others, so that they may not see ours, that

we are not in the least surprised or in doubt as to the assertion of the virtue, and at times even of the sanctity, of men who live an absolutely dissolute life. A man — man or woman — sleeps on a bed with springs, two mattresses, and two cleanly pressed sheets and slips, on down pillows. Near his bed is a mat, so that he may not be cold when stepping on the floor, although near by stand his slippers. Here also are the necessary articles, so that he does not need to go out. The windows are shielded by shades, so that the light cannot wake him, and he sleeps as long as he feels like sleeping. Besides, measures are taken to have the room warm in winter and cool in summer, and that he may not be disturbed by sounds and by flies and other insects. He sleeps, and the hot and cold water for washing, and at times for a bath and his shaving, are waiting for him. So also are the tea, or coffee, or bracing drinks, which are taken immediately after rising. His boots, shoes, overshoes, several pairs of them, which he soiled yesterday, are being cleaned in such a way that they shine like glass, and there is not a dust speck upon them. Similarly they are cleaning his various suits which he soiled on the previous day, and which correspond not only to winter and summer, but also to spring, autumn, rainy, damp, warm weather. There is prepared for him cleanly washed, starched, ironed linen, with shirt buttons, cuff buttons, loops, which are all looked after by men specially engaged for this.

If a man is active, he rises early, that is, at seven o'clock, still two or three hours later than the people who get all this ready for him. Besides the clothes got ready for the day and the bedding for the night, there are also the clothes and foot-gear for the time of the dressing, the gowns and slippers, and the man goes to wash, clean, and comb himself, for which several kinds of brushes and soaps and a great quantity of water and soap are used. (Many English people are for some reason particularly

proud of the fact that they can lather a lot of soap and pour upon themselves a great amount of water.) Then the man dresses himself, combs his hair before a special mirror, which is different from those which hang in every room, takes up his necessary articles, for the most part a pair of spectacles, or eye-glasses, or a lorgnette, then he puts things away in his pockets: a clean handkerchief to clear his nose with, a watch on a chain, although wherever he may be, almost in every room, there is a clock; he takes money of various denominations, coins (frequently in a special contrivance, which saves him the trouble of finding what he wants) and paper bills; visiting-cards, on which his name is printed and which save him the trouble of telling or writing it out; a white memorandum-book, and a pencil. A woman's dress is much more complicated: a corset, the coiffure, the long hair, the adornments, the ribbons, elastic, pins, hairpins, brooches.

But now everything is ended; the day generally begins with eating: coffee or tea, specially prepared, is taken with a large quantity of sugar, and rolls are eaten; the bread is made of the very best of wheat flour, with a large quantity of butter, sometimes with hog lard. The men generally smoke cigarettes or cigars during this meal, and then read a fresh newspaper, which has just been brought in. Then the going from home to the office or on business, or driving in carriages which exist especially to take people from place to place. Then a breakfast from killed animals, birds, fishes; then a similar dinner, which with great moderation consists of three courses, a sweet dish, coffee; then playing of cards, and playing, — music, or the theatre, reading, or conversation in soft, springy chairs under the intensified or softened light of candles, gas, electricity, — again tea, again eating, supper, and again to bed, prepared and puffed up, with clear linen, and rinsed vessels.

Such is the day of a man of moderate life, of whom, if he is of a soft character and has no habits which are exceedingly disagreeable to others, they say that he is a man who is leading a good life.

But a good life is that of a man who does good to others; how can a man who lives thus and who is accustomed to live thus do good to men? Before doing good, he must stop doing evil to men. But consider all the evil which he, frequently without knowing it himself, does to people, and you will see that he is far from doing good to people, and that he has to perform many, very many acts, in order to redeem the evil done by him, and yet he, who is weakened by his lustful life, is absolutely unable to perform any such acts. He could, indeed, sleep more healthily, both physically and morally, by lying on the floor on a cloak, as Marcus Aurelius slept, and so all the labour and work of the mattresses and springs, and of the down pillows, and the daily work of the laundress, a woman, a weak being with her female troubles and childbirths and nursing of children, a woman who is washing the linen belonging to him, a strong man, — all this work could be avoided. He could go to bed earlier and rise earlier, and the work of the shades and of the illumination in the evening could be avoided. He could sleep in the same shirt which he wore in the daytime, could step with his bare feet on the floor, and go out into the yard, could wash himself in the cold water at the well, — in short, could live as live all those who do all this for him, and so he could avoid all the labour which is put out on him. So also could be avoided all the work put on his clothes, his refined food, his amusements.

How, then, can such a man do good to people and lead a good life, without changing his pampered, luxurious life? A moral man, I do not say a Christian, — but just one who professes humanitarian principles, or only justice, cannot help but wish to change his life and stop making

use of the objects of luxury, which are often produced with harm to other people.

If a man really pities people who work with tobacco, the first thing he will involuntarily do is to stop smoking, because, by continuing to smoke and buy tobacco, he only encourages the production of tobacco, which ruins the health of people.

But the men of our time do not reason like that. They invent the strangest and cleverest reflections, except the one which naturally presents itself to every simple man. According to their reasoning it is not at all necessary to abstain from articles of luxury. We may have sympathy for the condition of the labourers, make speeches and write books in their favour, and at the same time continue to make use of those labours which we consider to be ruinous for them.

According to one kind of reasoning it turns out that it is right to make use of the ruinous labours of others, because, if I do not make use of them, somebody else will. It is like the reasoning that I must drink the wine which is injurious for me, because it is bought, and if I do not drink it, others will.

According to another kind of reasoning it appears that the use made of the labours of others for the sake of luxury is indeed very useful for them, because we thus give them money, that is, the possibility of existence, as though it were not possible to make it possible for them to exist in any other way than by compelling them to produce articles which are injurious to them and superfluous for us.

All this is due to the fact that men have come to imagine that it is possible to lead a good life without having attained the first quality in order, which is necessary for a good life.

Now the first quality is abstinence.

VIII.

THERE has been and there can be no good life without abstinence. No good life is thinkable without abstinence. Every attainment of a good life must begin through it.

There is a ladder of virtues, and we must begin with the first rung, in order to ascend to the next; and the first virtue which must be attained by a man, if he wants to attain the next, is what the ancients called *ἐγκράτεια* or *σωφροσύνη*, that is, reflection or self-possession.

If in the Christian teaching abstinence is included in the concept of self-renunciation, the consecutiveness none the less remains the same, and the attainment of no Christian virtues is possible without abstinence, not because somebody has thought it out so, but because such is the essence of the matter.

Abstinence is the first step of every good life.

But even abstinence is not attained at once, but by degrees.

Abstinence is a man's liberation from the lusts, their subjection to reason, *σωφροσύνη*. But there are many various lusts in man, and for the struggle with them to be successful he must begin with the basal ones, those on which other, more complex ones grow up, and not with the complex, which have grown up on the basal ones. There are complex passions, as the passion for adorning the body, games, amusements, gossiping, curiosity, and many others; and there are basal passions, such as gluttony, idleness, carnal love. In the struggle with the passions it is impossible to begin at the end, with the struggle with the complex passions; we must begin with

the basal ones, and that, too, in a definite order. This order is determined both by the essence of the thing and by the tradition of human wisdom.

A glutton is not able to struggle against idleness, and a gluttonous and idle man is unable to struggle with the sexual lust. And so, according to all teachings, the striving after abstinence began with the struggle against the lust of gluttony, began with fasting. But in our society, where every serious relation to the attainment of the good life is lost to such a degree and has been lost for so long a time that the very first virtue, abstinence, without which no others are possible, is considered superfluous, there is also lost the consecutiveness which is indispensable for the attainment of this first virtue, and many have forgotten all about fasting, and it has been decided that fasting is a foolish superstition, and that fasting is not at all necessary.

And yet, just as the first condition of a good life is abstinence, so the first condition of an abstemious life is fasting.

A man may wish to be good, dream of goodness, without fasting; but in reality it is just as impossible to be good without fasting, as it is to walk without getting up on one's feet.

Fasting is an indispensable condition of a good life. But gluttony has always been the first symptom of the reverse, of a bad life, and unfortunately this symptom has particular force in the life of the majority of the men of our time.

Glance at the faces and at the figures of the men of our circle and time, — on many of these faces with pendent chins and cheeks, obese limbs and large bellies, lies the ineffaceable imprint of a life of dissipation. Nor can it be otherwise. Look closely at our life, at that by which the majority of the men of our society are moved; ask yourself what is the chief interest of this majority. No

matter how strange this may appear to us, who are accustomed to conceal our true interests and to put forth false, artificial ones, the chief interest of the life of the majority of men of our time is the gratification of the sense of taste, the pleasure of eating, gluttony. Beginning with the poorest and ending with the wealthiest classes of society, gluttony, I think, is the chief aim, the chief pleasure of our life. The poor working people form an exception only to the extent to which want keeps them from surrendering themselves to this passion. The moment they have time and means for it, they, emulating the higher classes, provide themselves with what tastes best and is sweetest, and eat and drink as much as they can. The more they eat, the more they consider themselves, not only happy, but even strong and healthy. And in this conviction they are maintained by the cultured people, who look upon food in precisely this manner. The cultured classes imagine happiness and health to lie in savoury, nutritive, easily digested food (in which opinion they are confirmed by the doctors, who assert that the most expensive food, meat, is the most wholesome), though they try to conceal this.

Look at the life of these people, listen to their talk. What kind of exalted subjects interests them? Philosophy, and science, and art, and poetry, and the distribution of wealth, and the welfare of the people, and the education of youth; but all this is for the vast majority a lie. All this interests them only between business, between the real business, between breakfast and dinner, while the stomach is full, and it is not possible to eat any more. The one living, real interest, the interest of the majority of men and women, is eating, especially after their first youth. How to eat, what to eat, when, where?

Not one solemnity, not one joy, not one christening, not one opening of anything takes place without eating.

Look at people in their travels. In them you can see it best. "The museums, the libraries, the parliament,—how interesting! And where shall we dine? Who sets the best table?" Yes, just look at the people, as they come down to dinner, dressed up, besprinkled with perfume, to a table adorned with flowers, how joyously they rub their hands and smile!

If we could look into their souls,—what do the majority of men long for? For an appetite for breakfast, for dinner. In what does the severest punishment from childhood consist? In being reduced to bread and water. What artisan receives the greatest wages? The cook. In what does the chief interest of the lady of the house consist? Toward what does in the majority of cases the conversation incline between the ladies of the middle class? And if the conversation of the people of the higher classes does not incline toward it, the cause of it is not because they are more cultured and busy with higher interests, but only because they have a housekeeper or a steward who is busy with this and guarantees their dinners. But try to deprive them of this comfort, and you will see in what their cares lie. Everything reduces itself to the question of eating, the price of grouse, the best means for boiling coffee, baking sweet tarts, etc. People assemble, whatever the occasion may be,—christening, funeral, wedding, dedication of a church, farewell, reception, celebration of a memorable day, the death or birth of a great scholar, thinker, teacher of morality,—people assemble, claiming to be busy with some exalted subjects. So they say; but they dissemble: they all know that there will be something to eat, good, savoury food, and something to drink, and it is this mainly which has brought them together. For several days previous to this animals have been slaughtered and cut up for this very purpose, baskets with supplies have been brought from the gastronomic shops, and cooks, their assistants,

scullions, peasants of the buffet, especially dressed up in clean starched aprons and caps, have been "working." So, too, chefs, who receive five hundred roubles per month and more, have been working and giving orders. The cooks have been chopping, mixing, washing, arranging, adorning. With the same solemnity and importance there has been working a similar superintendent of service, counting, reflecting, casting his glance, like an artist. The gardener has been working for the flowers. The dishwashers — A whole army of men work, the products of thousands of work-days are devoured, and all this in order that the people assembled may have a chance to talk of the memorable great teacher of science or morality, or to recall a deceased friend, or to say farewell to a young couple who are entering upon a new life.

In the lower and middle class it is evident that a holiday, funeral, wedding, means gluttony. It is thus that they understand the matter in these classes. Gluttony to such an extent takes the place of the motive of assemblage that in Greek and French "wedding" and "feast" have the same meaning. But in the higher circle, amidst refined people, great art is employed in order to conceal this and to make it appear that the eating is a secondary matter, that it exists only for decency's sake. They can conveniently represent this in such a way, because for the most part they are in the real sense of the word satiated, — they are never hungry.

They pretend that they have no need of a dinner, of eating, and that it is even a burden to them. But try, instead of the refined dishes expected by them, to give them, I do not say bread and water, but porridge and noodles, and you will see what a storm this will provoke, and how the real facts will come to the surface, namely, that in the gathering of these men the chief interest is not the one which they put forth, but the interest of eating.

See what people deal in; walk through the city and see what is being sold: attire and articles of food.

In reality this ought to be so and cannot be otherwise. We cannot stop thinking of eating, keep this lust within its limits, only when we submit to the necessity of eating; but when a man, only submitting to this necessity, that is, to the fulness of the stomach, stops eating, then it cannot be otherwise. If a man has taken a liking to the pleasure of eating, has allowed himself to love this pleasure, and finds that this pleasure is good (as the vast majority of men of our society and the cultured find, although they pretend the opposite), then there is no limit to its increase, there are no limits beyond which it cannot grow. The gratification of a need has its limits; but enjoyment has none. For the gratification of a need it is indispensable and sufficient to eat bread, porridge, or rice; for the increase of enjoyment there is no end to dishes and to seasonings.

Bread is an indispensable and sufficient food (the proof of this: millions of strong, lithe, healthy men, who work much, live on nothing but bread). But it is better to eat bread with some preparation. It is good to soak bread in water with meat boiled in it. It is still better to put vegetables into this water, and still better a lot of different vegetables. It is not bad to eat meat itself. But it is better to eat, not boiled, but roasted meat. And still better, meat slightly broiled with butter, and with the blood, and only certain parts of it. Add to this vegetables and mustard. And wash it down with wine, best of all red wine. You do not feel like eating anything else, but you can still devour some fish, if it is seasoned with sauce, and you can wash it down with white wine. One would think that no other fat or savoury food would go down. But you may still eat something sweet, in the summer ice-cream, in the winter preserves, jams, etc. And this is a dinner, a modest dinner. The pleasure

of this dinner may be greatly, very greatly increased. And people do increase it, and there is no limit to this increase: there are appetizers, and *entremets*, and desserts, and all kinds of combinations of savoury food, and adornments, and music during the dinner.

And, strange to say, the people who every day eat such dinners, in comparison with which Belshazzar's feast, which called forth the remarkable threat, is nothing, are naïvely convinced that they can with it all lead a moral life.

IX.

FASTING is an indispensable condition of a good life; but in fasting, as in abstinence, there appears the question, with what to begin the fasting, how to fast, how often to eat, what not to eat. And as it is impossible seriously to busy oneself with anything, without having acquired the consecutiveness necessary for it, so it is impossible to fast, without knowing with what to begin the fast, with what to begin the abstinence from food.

Fasting! But there is the choice to be made as to what to begin with. This idea seems ridiculous and extravagant to the majority of men.

I remember with what pride, on account of his originality, an Evangelical Protestant, who was attacking the asceticism of monasticism, said to me, "My Christianity is not with fasts and privations, but with beefsteaks." Christianity and virtue in general with beefsteaks!

So many savage and immoral things have eaten their way into our life, especially into that lower sphere of the first step toward a good life, the relation to food, to which very few people have paid any attention, that it is difficult for us even to comprehend the boldness and madness of the assertion in our time of a Christianity or virtue with beefsteaks.

The only reason why we are not horrified at this assertion is that with us has happened the unusual thing that we look and do not see, that we listen and do not hear. There is no stench, no sound, no monstrosity, to which a man cannot get used, so that he no longer notices what

is startling to a man who is not used to it. The same is true in the moral sphere. Christianity and morality with beefsteaks!

The other day I visited the slaughter-house in our city of Túla. The slaughter-house is built according to a new, perfected method, as it is built in large cities, so that the animals killed shall suffer as little as possible. This was on a Friday, two days before Pentecost. There were there a large number of cattle.

Before that, a long time before, when reading the beautiful book, *Ethics of Diet*, I had made up my mind to visit the slaughter-house, in order with my own eyes to see the facts of the case, which are mentioned whenever vegetarianism is mentioned. But I felt uneasy, as one always feels uneasy when going to see sufferings which are sure to be there, but which one cannot prevent, and so I kept putting it off.

But lately I met on the road a butcher, who had been home and now was going back to Túla. He is not yet an experienced butcher, and his duty consists in stabbing with a dagger. I asked him whether he did not feel sorry that he had to kill the animals. And as the answer always is, so he answered, "Why be sorry? This has to be done." But when I told him that eating meat was not necessary, he agreed with me, and then he also agreed with me that it was a pity to kill. "What is to be done? I have to make a living," he said. "At first I was afraid to kill. My father never killed a chicken in all his life."

The majority of Russians cannot kill; they feel pity, which they express by the word "afraid." He, too, had been afraid, but had stopped. He explained to me that the busiest day is Friday, when the work lasts until evening.

Lately, too, I had a talk with a soldier, a butcher, and he, too, was surprised in the same way at my assertion that it is a pity to kill; and, as always, he said that this

was the law; but later he agreed with me, "Especially when it is a tame, kind animal. The dear animal comes up to you, believing you. It is truly a pity!"

One day we returned from Moscow on foot, and some drivers of drays, going from Serpukhóv to a forest to get a merchant's timber, gave us a lift. It was Maundy Thursday. I was riding in the first telėga with a strong, red-faced, coarse driver, who was apparently very drunk. As we entered a village, we saw that from the last yard they were pulling a fattened, shorn, pink-coloured pig, to get it killed. The pig squealed in a desperate voice, which resembled that of a man. Just as we passed by, they began to kill the pig. One of the men drew the knife down its throat. It squealed louder and more penetratingly than before, tore itself loose, and ran away, shedding its blood. I am near-sighted and so did not see all the details; all I saw was the pink-coloured flesh of the pig, which resembled that of a man, and I heard the desperate squeal; but the driver saw all the details, and he looked in that direction without taking his eyes off. The pig was caught and thrown down, and they began to finish the killing. When its squeal died down, the driver drew a deep sigh.

"Is it possible men will not have to answer for this?" he muttered.

So strong is people's disgust at any kind of a murder; but by example, by encouraging men's greed, by the assertion that this is permitted by God, and chiefly by habit, people have been brought to a complete loss of this natural feeling.

On Friday I went to Túla, and, upon meeting an acquaintance of mine, a meek, kindly man, I invited him to go with me.

"Yes, I have heard that it is well arranged, and I should like to see it, but if they slaughter there, I sha'n't go in."

"Why not? It is precisely what I want to see. If meat is to be eaten, cattle have to be killed."

"No, no, I cannot."

What is remarkable in this case is, that this man is a hunter and himself kills birds and animals.

We arrived. Even before entering we could smell the oppressive, detestable, rotten odour of joiner's glue or of glue paint. The farther we went, the stronger was this odour. It is a very large, red brick building, with vaults and high chimneys. We entered through the gate. On the right was a large fenced yard, about a quarter of a desyatína in size, — this is the cattle-yard, to which the cattle for sale are driven two days in the week, — and at the edge of this space is the janitor's little house; on the left were what they call the chambers, that is, rooms with round gates, concave asphalt floors, and appliances for hanging up and handling the carcasses. By the wall of the little house, and to the right of it, sat six butchers in aprons, which were covered with blood, with blood-bespattered sleeves rolled up over muscular arms. They had finished their work about half an hour ago, so that on that day we could see only the empty chambers. In spite of the gates being opened on two sides, there was in each chamber an oppressive odour of warm blood; the floor was cinnamon-coloured and shining, and in the depressions of the floor stood coagulated black gore.

One of the butchers told us how they slaughtered, and showed us the place where this is done. I did not quite understand him, and formed a false, but very terrible conception of how they slaughtered, and I thought, as is often the case, that the reality would produce a lesser effect upon me than what I had imagined. But I was mistaken in this.

The next time I came to the slaughter-house in time. It was on Friday before Pentecost. It was a hot June day. The odour of glue and of blood was even more op-

pressive and more noticeable in the morning, than during my first visit. The work was at white heat. The dusty square was all full of cattle, and the cattle were driven into all the stalls near the chambers.

In the street in front of the building stood carts with steers, heifers, and cows tied to the cart stakes and shafts. Butchers' carts, drawn by good horses, loaded with live calves with dangling heads, drove up and unloaded; and similar carts with upturned and shaking legs of the carcasses of steers, with their heads, bright red lungs and dark red livers drove away from the slaughter-house. Near the fence stood the mounts of the cattle-dealers. The cattle-dealers themselves, in their long coats, with whips and knouts in their hands, walked up and down in the yard, either marking one man's cattle with tar paint, or haggling, or attending to the transfer of bulls and steers from the square to the stalls, from which the cattle entered the chambers. These men were obviously all absorbed in money operations and calculations, and the thought that it is good or bad to kill these animals was as far from them as the thought as to what was the chemical composition of the blood with which the floor of the chambers was covered.

No butchers could be seen in the yards: they were all working in the chambers. During this day about one hundred steers were killed. I entered a chamber and stopped at the door. I stopped, both because the chamber was crowded with the carcasses which were being shifted, and because the blood ran underfoot and dripped from above, and all the butchers who were there were smeared in it, and, upon entering inside, I should certainly have been smeared with blood. They were taking down one carcass, which was suspended; another was being moved to the door; a third, a dead ox, was lying with his white legs turned up, and a butcher with his strong fist was ripping the stretched-out hide.

Through the door opposite to the one where I was standing they were at that time taking in a large, red, fattened ox. Two men were pulling him. And they had barely brought him in, when I saw a butcher raise a dagger over his head and strike him. The ox dropped down on his belly, as though he had been knocked off all his four legs at once, immediately rolled over on one side, and began to kick with his legs and with his whole back. One of the butchers immediately threw himself on the fore part of the ox, from the end opposite his kicking legs, took hold of his horns, bent his head to the ground, and from beneath the head there spirted the dark red blood, under the current of which a boy besmeared in blood placed a tin basin. All the time while they were doing this, the ox kept jerking his head, as though trying to get up, and kicked with all his four legs in the air. The basin filled rapidly, but the ox was still alive and, painfully contracting and expanding his belly, kicked with his fore legs and hind legs, so that the butchers had to get out of his way. When one basin was filled, the boy carried it on his head to the albumen plant, while another boy set down another basin, which also began to fill up. But the ox kept contracting and expanding his belly and jerked with his hind legs. When the blood stopped flowing, the butcher raised the head of the ox and began to flay him. The ox continued kicking. The head was bared and began to look red with white veins, and assumed the position given to it by the butchers; on both sides of it hung the hide. The ox continued to kick. Then another butcher caught the ox by a leg, which he broke and cut off. Convulsions ran up and down the belly and the other legs. The other legs, too, were cut off, and they were thrown where all the legs belonging to one owner were thrown. Then the carcass was pulled up to a block and tackle and was stretched out, and there all motion stopped.

Thus I stood at the door and looked at a second, a third, a fourth ox. With all of them the same happened: the same flayed head with pinched tongue and the same kicking back. The only difference was that the butcher did not always strike in the right place to make the ox fall. It happened that the butcher made a mistake, and the ox jumped up, bellowed, and, shedding blood, tried to get away. But then he was pulled under a beam and struck a second time, after which he fell.

I later walked up from the side of the door, through which they brought in the oxen. Here I saw the same, only at closer range, and, therefore, more clearly. I saw here, above all else, what I had not seen through the other door, — how they compelled the oxen to walk through this door. Every time when they took an ox out of the stall and pulled him by a rope, which was attached to his horns, the ox, scenting the blood, became stubborn and bellowed, and sometimes jerked back. It was impossible for two men to pull him in by force, and so a butcher every time went behind and took the ox by the tail, which he twisted until the gristle cracked and the tail broke, and the ox moved on.

The oxen of one owner were all finished, and they brought up the cattle of another. The first from this lot of the other owner was a bull. He was a fine-looking, thoroughbred black bull, with white spots on his body and white legs, — a young, muscular, energetic animal. They began to pull him; he dropped his head and absolutely refused to move. But the butcher who was walking behind took hold of his tail, as a machinist puts his hand on the throttle, and twisted it; the cartilage cracked, and the bull rushed ahead, knocking the men who were pulling at the rope off their feet, and again stood stubbornly still, looking askance with his white, bloodshot eyes. But again the tail cracked, and the bull rushed forward and was where he was wanted. The butcher

walked up, took his aim, and struck him. But the stroke did not fall in the right place. The bull jumped up, tossed his head, bellowed, and, all covered with blood, tore himself loose and rushed back. All the people at the doors started back; but the accustomed butchers, with a daring which was the result of the peril, briskly took hold of the rope and again of the tail, and again the bull found himself in the chamber, where his head was pulled under the beam, from which he no longer tore himself away. The butcher briskly looked for the spot where the hair scatters in the form of a star, and, having found it, in spite of the blood, struck him, and the beautiful animal, which was full of life, came down with a crash and kicked with its head and legs, while they let off the blood and flayed the head.

"Accursed devil, he did not even fall the right way," growled the butcher as he cut the hide from his head.

Five minutes later the red, instead of black, head, without the hide, with glassy, fixed eyes, which but five minutes before had glistened with such a beautiful colour, was suspended on the beam.

Then I entered the division where they butcher the smaller animals. It is a very large and long chamber, with an asphalt floor and with tables with backs, on which they butcher sheep and calves. Here the work was all finished; in the long chamber, which was saturated with the odour of blood, there were only two butchers. One was blowing into the leg of a dead wether and patting the blown-up belly; the other, a young lad, with a blood-bespattered apron, was smoking a bent cigarette. There was no one else in the gloomy, long chamber, which was saturated with the oppressive odour. Immediately after me there came in one who looked like an ex-soldier, who brought a black yearling lamb, with spots on his neck, which he put down on one of the tables, as though on a bed. The soldier, apparently

an acquaintance of theirs, greeted them and asked them when their master gave them days off. The young lad with the cigarette walked up with a knife, which he sharpened at the edge of the table, and answered that they had their holidays free. The live plump lamb was lying quietly as though dead, only briskly wagging his short tail and breathing more frequently than usual. The soldier lightly, without effort, held down his head, which was rising up; the young lad, continuing the conversation, took the lamb's head with his left hand and quickly drew the knife down his throat. The lamb shivered, and the little tail became arched and stopped wagging. While waiting for the blood to run off, the young lad puffed at the cigarette, which had nearly gone out. The blood began to flow, and the lamb began to be convulsed. The conversation was continued without the least interruption.

And those hens and chickens, which every day in a thousand kitchens, with heads cut off, shedding blood, jump about comically and terribly, flapping their wings?

And behold, a tender, refined lady will devour the corpses of these animals with the full conviction of her righteousness, asserting two propositions, which mutually exclude one another:

The first, that she is so delicate — and of this she is assured by her doctor — that she is unable to live on vegetable food alone, but that her weak organism demands animal food; and the second, that she is so sensitive that she not only cannot cause any sufferings to any animal, but cannot even bear the sight of them.

And yet, this poor lady is weak for the very reason, and for no other, that she has been taught to subsist on food which is improper for man; and she cannot help but cause the animals suffering, because she devours them.

X.

We cannot pretend that we do not know this. We are not ostriches, and we cannot believe that, if we do not look, there will not be what we do not wish to see. This is the more impossible, when we do not wish to see what we wish to eat. And, above all else, if it were only indispensable! But let us assume that it is not indispensable, but necessary for some purpose. It is not.[1] It is good only for bringing out animal sensations, breeding lust, fornication, drunkenness. This is constantly confirmed by the fact that good, uncorrupted young men, especially women and girls, feel, without knowing how one thing follows from the other, that virtue is not compatible with beefsteak, and as soon as they wish to be good, they give up animal food.

What, then, do I wish to say? Is it this, that men, to be moral, must stop eating meat? Not at all.

What I wanted to say is, that for a good life a certain order of good acts is indispensable; that if the striving after the good life is serious in a man, it will inevitably assume one certain order, and that in this order the first virtue for a man to work on is abstinence, self-possession. And in striving after abstinence, a man will inevitably

[1] Let those who doubt it read those numerous books, composed by scholars and physicians, in which it is proved that meat is not necessary for man's alimentation. And let them not listen to those old-fashioned doctors, who defend the necessity of subsisting on meat, only because their predecessors and they themselves have recognized it as necessary for a long time, — they defend it with stubbornness, with malice, as everything old and obsolete is always defended. — *Author's Note.*

follow one certain order, and in this order the first subject will be abstinence in food, fasting. But in fasting, if he seriously and sincerely seeks a good life, the first from which a man will abstain will always be the use of animal food, because, to say nothing of the excitation of the passions, which this food produces, its use is directly immoral, since it demands an act which is contrary to our moral sense, — murder, — and is provoked only by the desire and craving for good eating.

Why abstinence from animal food will be the first work of fasting and a moral life has excellently been said, not by one man, but by the whole of humanity, in the persons of its best representatives in the course of the whole conscious life of humanity.

"But why, if the illegality, that is, the immorality, of animal food has for so long a time been known to humanity, have men not yet come to recognize this law?" is what those men will ask who are generally guided, not so much by their reason, as by public opinion. The answer to this question is this, that the moral progress of humanity, which forms the basis of every progress, always takes place slowly; but that the symptom of the true, not the accidental, progress is its unceasingness and constant acceleration.

And such is the motion of vegetarianism. This motion is expressed in all the thoughts of the writers on this subject, and in the life of humanity itself, which more and more passes unconsciously from meat eating to vegetable food, and consciously in the motion of vegetarianism, which has been manifesting itself with especial force and is assuming ever greater dimensions. This motion has for the last ten years been growing faster and faster; there appear every year more and more books and periodicals which deal with this subject; we constantly meet more and more men who reject animal food; and the number of vegetarian restaurants and hotels is growing

every year abroad, especially in Germany, England, and America.

This motion must be particularly pleasing to those who live striving after the realization of the kingdom of God upon earth, not because vegetarianism in itself is an important step toward this kingdom (all true steps are both important and not important), but because it serves as a sign of this, that the striving after man's moral perfection is serious and sincere, since it has assumed the proper invariable order, which begins with the first step.

We cannot help but rejoice in this, just as people could not help but rejoice who, striving to get to the top of a house, had been vainly and in disorder trying to climb the walls from various sides, and now at last assemble near the first rung of the ladder, knowing that there is no way of getting to the top but by beginning at this first rung of the ladder.

THE TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

1885

THE TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

THE Teaching of the Twelve Apostles is an ancient manuscript, which was lately found in an old volume of collections. This manuscript was known to the ancient fathers of the church, Athanasius, Eusebius, and others, who knew it and mentioned it in their writings, but the manuscript itself was lost.

In 1883 the Greek Metropolitan Brienios, who was living in Constantinople, discovered this teaching in an ancient manuscript and printed it.

This teaching is the most ancient exposition of the sermons of Jesus Christ. It was written at a time when the men who had heard Jesus Christ were still alive.

This teaching is divided into two parts, — one, ancient, from Chapter I. to VI., and the second, which was added later, from Chapter VI. to the last chapter. The last chapters have reference to the arrangement of the life of Christ's disciples; but in the first five chapters we have a record of Christ's teaching to men, the same which is recorded in Chapters V., VI., and VII. of the Gospel of Matthew, and which Christ had announced on the mount to all simple people, that they might find out this teaching and become saved. This teaching is the same good announcement which Christ enjoined His disciples to preach to the Gentiles, the same of which He

said to His disciples (Mark xvi. 15), Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

POSTSCRIPT

In this ancient teaching everything is said which every man needs for the recognition of Christ's truth and the salvation of his soul.

This teaching is not long and not intricate, and any man may read it, and any man may understand it, and any man may fulfil it. Christ said (Luke x. 21), I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. It says also (Matt. xi. 28–30), Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

And again it says (John vii. 37), If any man thirst, let him oome unto me, and drink.

And here it is, the teaching which was revealed to babes, that easy yoke and light burden, to which He calls us, that spring of living water, to which any man may come. It is the same teaching which was preached by Christ on the mount, and was recorded in Chapters V., VI., and VII. of Matthew, and which is called the sermon on the mount. Everything which is needed for the salvation of one's soul is contained in this teaching, and millions and millions of Christians have been saved by it and the world is saved by it.

Christ said, I am the way and the truth and the life, and again He said (Matt. vii. 13–14), Enter ye at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the

way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

And the teaching begins with Christ's showing, among the many, the broad, ways which lead to destruction, the one narrow way of truth, which leads to life.

The narrow way of truth, which leads to life, consists in loving God and our neighbour.

The broad way, — the way of the lie, which leads to death, this is all the ways on which men walk without love of God and of their neighbours.

The way of life is in the other commandments: in love of God and of our neighbours.

In the first chapter, reference is made to the first commandment about the love of God. The love of God consists in the love of all men, even as it says in another place that God is love. It consists in loving not only our neighbours, but also those whom we do not know, in loving those who love and those who hate us; and so we are not only not to take anything from people, except what we are in need of, but we should give everything we have and our labour to other men, without knowing even for whom we are working. This is the teaching of the first commandment, — of the love of God.

In the second chapter it speaks of the second commandment about the love of our neighbour, of which it says in another place that it resembles the first. The love of our neighbour consists in not doing to our neighbour what we do not wish to have done to us. We should not kill or dishonour children and women, steal, curse, lie, take away from others or retain any property, and so we should admonish the erring, pray for the feeble, and love the good better than our soul. This is the teaching of the second commandment about the love of our neighbour.

In the third chapter it speaks of the offences. The offences consist in those affairs which lead to sins against the love of God and of our neighbour. There are five

sins that are enumerated, — murder, debauchery, idolatry, stealing, cursing; and those offences are pointed out that lead to these sins: anger, quarrels, disputes, lead to murder; the seeking of enjoyments, impure speeches, the contemplation of other people's sins, lead to debauchery; divination, the calling out of spirits, idle philosophizing, lead to idolatry; lying, envy, greed, vanity, lead to stealing; self-confidence, dissatisfaction, and pride lead to cursing. This is the teaching of the offences.

In the fourth chapter it speaks of how a man may strengthen himself on the path of life. Five means are enumerated: attention to the word of God, communion with saints, peaceful intercourse with men, renunciation of property, and the recognition over oneself and over others of no other power than the one which is given by the spirit of truth. This is the teaching about the strengthening of the forces on the path of life.

In the fifth chapter it speaks of that world of men who live outside the commandments of God and walk on the path of death. These men suffer, torment others, and all walk toward death. This is the teaching about what awaits man on the path of death.

The remaining eleven chapters speak of the details of the arrangement of the Christian community. But even in these first five chapters there is expounded the whole teaching which is necessary for the salvation of every man. The teaching of these five chapters is simple and comprehensible.

Christ shows us the path of salvation and the path of destruction; He shows us, besides, what we ought not to do, and what we ought, in order that it may be easy for us to walk on the path of salvation. By giving us the direction of the path, Christ points out to us those deceptions which may make us stray from it, and, besides, teaches us what may support us. He treats us as a good father would treat his son, when sending him out on the

road. First of all the father would say to his son: "You must travel straight on the road, which leads you where it will be well for you, and if you shall not travel straight on the road, you will perish. And so, that you may not lose it, travel in the daytime with the sun, and in the night with the star which I will point out to you." But the father would not be satisfied with this; he loves his son, and is afraid that he may lose his way, and so he would say to him, "As you walk, you will come to a turn on the right: do not turn into it; then you will come to a cross-road: take the middle road; then you will come to a turn on the left: do not walk on it; then you will come to a forked road: take the left one." Thus the father would tell his son the road in advance. But more than this: the father would give his son a staff and a wallet, so that he might have something to lean on and something to eat, and only then would he send him off.

It is precisely what Christ has done with us. First of all He showed us the road which will bring us to our goal, — and showed us as the sun, the love of God, and as the star, the love of our neighbour, and commanded us to go by them; then He showed us in detail all the turns which might make us stray. He said, "Anger, quarrels, will come, — stop and bethink yourself, — this is one of the turns which may lead you away from the path of life; do not walk on it, but walk straight on.

"There will come lust, — this is another turn; again bethink yourself, and do not travel on the false path. There will come ambition, selfishness, — know that these, too, are false paths."

But more than this: Christ, besides these indications, gives us also something to strengthen us on our path, — He gives us bread and the staff for our journey. He teaches us what can sustain us on our path, gives us food and support in the divine word, in the communion with saints, in the establishment of peace among men, in the

renunciation of property, in the liberation from every domination but that of truth.

Christ knew our weakness and did everything that we might be able with our weakness to walk on His path. This teaching is such that, if we understand it, we cannot excuse ourselves because of our weakness. If we believe that all paths outside of Christ's lead to death, we can no longer say that we should like to walk on the path of life, but are unable to do so; nor can we excuse ourselves on the ground of ignorance of the road; everything which we need in order not to stray from the road and that we may walk upon it has been given to us. And if we say that we are too weak and cannot follow Christ, Christ will answer us, "It is for your weakness' sake that I have pointed out to you in advance all those turns which may lead you astray or may teach you how to act; for the sake of your weakness have I given you on the road everything which may strengthen you. Why do you not stop where I told you to stop and think of my words? Why do you not take with you on the road everything that I have told you will fortify you?"

What will the father say to his son, whom he has sent out on the road, after supplying him with instructions and with food, when he finds his son gone astray in another direction? He will no doubt be sorry for him and will again lead him out on the road, and will again furnish him with instructions as to how to walk; and again the same instructions, because there are no others; but he will not listen to the excuses of the son that he has gone astray because it was hard for him to remember all the instructions given him for the road, because a man whose only business it is to walk cannot find it hard to remember whither he is going. But if he says that he has forgotten, he is a hypocrite or a madman. And we are hypocrites or madmen when we say that we believe in Christ and do not walk on His path.

Christ has shown us the path of the liberation from death and is waiting for us on this path. And if we believe Him, we shall walk on it. And if we walk on it, we shall find out, as He has told us, that the yoke is good and the burden light, and we shall come out on the path of life and shall come to Him.

MASTER AND WORKMAN

1895

MASTER AND WORKMAN

I.

THIS happened in the seventies, on the seventh of December. There was a holiday in the parish, and the village innkeeper, the merchant of the second guild, Vasíli Andréich Brekhunóv, could not get off, — he had to be in the church, for he was a church elder, and at home he had to receive and entertain his relatives and friends. And now the last guests had departed, and Vasíli Andréich was getting ready immediately to go to a neighbouring landed proprietor, in order to buy from him a grove for which he had been haggling for quite a while.

Vasíli Andréich was in a hurry to go there, so that the merchants from the city might not cut him out of this advantageous bargain. The young proprietor asked ten thousand for the grove, for no other reason than that Vasíli Andréich offered seven for it. In reality, seven thousand formed only one-third of the real value of the grove. Vasíli Andréich would probably have got it down to his own price, since the woods were in his district and between him and the village buyers of the county there had long been an agreement that one merchant would not raise another merchant's price; but Vasíli Andréich had learned that some lumber dealers from the capital of the Government intended to come down to bid for the Goryáchkino grove, and so he decided to go at once and

settle the business with the proprietor. And so, the moment the holiday was over, he took out of his trunk his own seven hundred roubles, added to it 2,300 roubles belonging to the church, so as to get together the sum of three thousand roubles, and, after having cautiously counted the money over and put it away in his pocket-book, got ready to go.

Workman Nikíta, the only one of Vasíli Andréich's workmen who was not drunk this day, ran to hitch up. Nikíta was not drunk on that day, because he was a drunkard, and now, since Shrovetide, during which he had spent in drink his sleeveless coat and leather boots, he had made a vow not to drink, and had not drunk for two months; he had not drunk even at that time in spite of the temptation of the liquor which had been consumed during the first two days of the holiday.

Nikíta was a fifty-year-old peasant, from a neighbouring village, not a master, as they said of him, but one who had passed the greater part of his life, not at home, but working out. He was everywhere highly regarded for his industry, agility, and strength in his work, but mainly for his good and agreeable character; but he did not settle anywhere, because twice a year, and sometimes oftener, he went on a spree, when he not only spent everything he had on drink, but also became riotous and quarrelsome. Vasíli Andréich, too, had several times sent him away, but had later taken him back, as he appreciated his honesty, his love of animals, and especially his cheapness. Vasíli Andréich did not pay Nikíta eighty roubles, which such a workman was worth, but only forty roubles, which he paid him out without any order, in driblets, and then for the most part not in money, but in high-priced articles from the shop.

Nikíta's wife, Márfa, who had once been a handsome, sturdy woman, was now keeping house with her half-grown boy and two girls, and did not invite Nikíta to

come and stay with her, in the first place, because she had for something like twenty years been living with a cooper, a peasant from a neighbouring village, who was living in her house; and in the second, because, although she could manage her husband when he was sober, she was as afraid of him as of fire when he was drunk. One time Nikíta got himself drunk at home, probably in order to have revenge on his wife for his sober meekness, and broke open her trunk, got out her most expensive garments, and, taking an axe, chopped on a block all her jackets and dresses into bits. All the wages which Nikíta earned were given up to his wife, and Nikíta did not have any objection to this. Even so now, two days before the holiday, Márfa came to Vasíli Andréich and got from him white flour, tea, and an eighth of a measure of liquor, — all for the value of about three roubles, — and took, besides, five roubles in money, for which she thanked him as for a special favour, whereas at the cheapest price Vasíli Andréich owed Nikíta twenty roubles.

"Have we made any agreement?" Vasíli Andréich used to say to Nikíta. "If you need anything, take it, — you will work it off. I do not do like other people: 'Wait,' and accounts, and fines. We do things honestly. You serve me, and I do not leave you in a lurch."

Saying this, Vasíli Andréich was sincerely convinced that he was doing Nikíta a great favour; he spoke convincingly, and all people who were dependent on his money, beginning with Nikíta, supported him in this conviction that he was not cheating, but conferring benefactions upon them.

"Yes, I understand, Vasíli Andréich. It seems to me, I am serving you as though you were my own father. I understand very well," Nikíta would answer, though he understood very well that Vasíli Andréich was cheating him, and yet he felt that there was no use in trying to clear up his accounts with him, but that it was necessary

to stay there, so long as he had no other place, and take what they gave him.

Now, when he received his master's command to hitch up, Nikíta, as always, merrily and cheerfully, with a brisk and light step of his waddling feet went to the shed, took the tasselled leather bridle down from a peg and, letting the bit rings clatter, went to the locked stable, where stood by himself the horse which Vasíli Andréich had ordered to have harnessed.

"Well, do you feel lonely, you little silly?" said Nikíta, answering the weak whinnying of greeting with which he was met by the middle-sized, fine-looking stallion, with somewhat sloping back and yellow muzzle, which was standing all alone in the stable. "Come now, come now! You will have time enough for it, — let me give you first some water," he said to the horse, as though he were speaking to a being that could understand his words, and, wiping with the skirt of his coat the fat, grooved, worn off, dust-covered back, he put the bridle on the beautiful young head of the stallion, straightened out his ears and forelock, and, throwing down the halter, took the horse to water.

Making his way carefully out of the manure-littered stable, Yellow-muzzle frisked and kicked, pretending that he meant with his hind leg to kick Nikíta, who was racing down with him to the well.

"Have your fun, have your fun, rogue!" Nikíta kept saying. He knew with what care Yellow-muzzle kicked up his hind foot, only hard enough to touch his soiled short fur coat, but not to strike him, and he was fond of this trick.

When the horse had had his fill of cold water, he drew a deep sigh, mumbling with his wet, strong lips, from which transparent drops fell down from his whiskers, and he stood still, as though lost in thought; then he suddenly snorted out loud.

"If you do not want to, you don't have to, and I'll know better; don't ask me again," said Nikíta, quite seriously and circumstantially explaining his conduct to Yellow-muzzle. He again ran up to the shed, pulling by the rein the merry young horse who kept kicking and whinnying loud.

There were no workmen present; there was there but one stranger, the cook's husband, who had come for the holidays.

"Go, dear man, and ask him," Nikíta said to him, "what sleigh he wants me to hitch up, the broad one, or the little sleigh."

The cook's husband entered the tin-roof covered house, which stood on a high foundation, and soon returned with the information that he was to hitch up the little sleigh. By that time Nikíta had already put on the collar, and strapped the belly-band with the brass nails, and, carrying the painted arch in one hand and leading the horse with the other, was walking up to two sleighs which were standing under the shed.

"Let it be the little one, I do not care," he said. He led the horse, which kept pretending that he wanted to bite him, in between the shafts, and with the aid of the cook's husband began to hitch the horse to the sleigh.

When everything was almost done, and he had only to fix the reins, he sent the cook's husband to the shed for straw and to the barn for the matting.

"Now it is all done. Come now, don't be so restless!" said Nikíta, as he pressed into the sleigh the freshly threshed oat-straw which the cook's husband had brought. "Now let me put down the blanket, and the matting on top. That's it, that's it, — it will be nice to sit in it," he said, doing what he was saying, that is, tucking the matting under the straw on all sides of the seat. "Thank you, dear man," Nikíta said to the cook's husband, "two people get done quickly," and, straightening out the leather

reins with the ring where they meet, Nikíta seated himself on the driver's seat and touched the horse, which was begging for the reins, and started over the frozen manure of the yard toward the gate.

"Uncle Nikíta, uncle, oh, uncle!" a seven-year-old boy, in a short black fur coat, new white felt boots, and warm cap, who came running fast from the vestibule into the yard, called out behind him in a shrill voice. "Take me along," he begged, buttoning his coat as he ran.

"All right, all right, darling," said Nikíta, and, stopping, he helped the pale, thin little lad, his master's child, who beamed with joy, into the sleigh, and drove out into the street.

It was past two. It was frosty, — about ten degrees Reaumur, gloomy, and windy. Half the sky was covered with a low, dark cloud. But everything was quiet in the yard. In the street the wind was more noticeable: the snow swept down from a neighbouring shed, and it whirled in the corner near the bath-house. Nikíta had barely driven out of the yard and turned his horse toward the entrance of the house, when Vasíli Andréich, with a cigarette in his mouth, in a cloth-covered sheepskin-fur coat, tightly girded low in his waist with a belt, came out of the vestibule on the high porch, which was covered with snow that squeaked under his leather-covered felt boots, and stopped. Taking a last puff from the cigarette, he threw it down at his feet and stepped upon it, and, letting the smoke escape through his moustache and looking sidewise at the horse that was coming out of the gate, began on both sides of his ruddy, shaven face to fix the corners of his sheepskin collar, with the fur turned in, so that it might not sweat from his breath.

"Look at the rogue, he is there already!" he said, when he saw his son in the sleigh. Vasíli Andréich was in a state of excitation from the wine which he had drunk with the guests, and so more than ever satisfied with

everything which belonged to him and with everything he did. The sight of his son, whom he in his thoughts always called his heir, now afforded him especial pleasure; he looked at him, blinking and displaying his long teeth.

Vasíli Andréich's pale, lean, pregnant wife, whose head and shoulders were wrapped in a woollen kerchief, so that only her eyes could be seen, saw him off: she stood behind him, in the vestibule.

"Really, you had better take Nikíta along," she said, timidly stepping through the door.

Vasíli Andréich made no reply to her words, which evidently displeased him, frowned angrily, and spit out.

"You are travelling with money," his wife continued, in the same pitiable voice. "And I am afraid the weather may get bad, truly I am."

"Well, do I not know the road, that I must by all means have a guide with me?" muttered Vasíli Andréich with that unnatural tension of the lips with which he usually spoke to buyers and sellers, pronouncing every syllable with especial precision.

"Really, I wish you would take him. I implore you, for God's sake!" repeated his wife, wrapping her kerchief over her other side.

"You are as persistent as a bathbroom leaf. What is the use of my taking him?"

"Why not, Vasíli Andréich, I should be glad," Nikíta said, cheerfully. "If only they will feed the horses while I am away," he added, turning to his master's wife.

"I will see to it, Nikíta. I will tell Semén to feed them," said the mistress.

"Well, do you want me to go with you, Vasíli Andréich?" said Nikíta, waiting for an answer.

"I see I shall have to obey the old woman. But if you are to go, you had better go and put on some warmer togs," said Vasíli Andréich, smiling again and blinking at

Nikíta's short fur coat, which was torn under the arms and in the back, tattered at the lower edge, soiled, and out of shape, and had been used for every imaginable purpose.

"Come, dear man, hold the horse!" Nikíta shouted into the yard, to the cook's husband.

"I will myself, I will myself!" squeaked the boy, taking his stiffened red little hands out of his pocket and seizing the cold leather reins.

"Only, don't clean up your togs too much! Be lively!" cried Vasíli Andréich, displaying his teeth at Nikíta.

"In one breath, father, Vasíli Andréich," said Nikíta, and, swiftly mincing with his in-toeing, old, felt-patched felt boots, he ran into the yard and into the workmen's hut.

"Here, Arínushka! Hand me the cloak down from the oven, — I am going with the master!" said Nikíta, as he ran into the hut and took a belt down from a peg.

The woman, who had had a nap after dinner and now was getting a samovár ready for her husband, met Nikíta cheerfully, and, infected by his haste, began to move as rapidly as he, and fetched down from the oven, where it was getting dry, a miserable, threadbare cloth caftan, and began hurriedly to shake it out and open it up.

"You will have a fine time with your master," Nikíta said to the cook. Out of good-natured politeness, Nikíta always said something to a person, when he was left alone with one.

Girding himself with the narrow, worn-out belt, he drew in his belly, which was drawn in as it was, and laced himself as tightly as he could over his short fur coat.

"That's it," he said to himself after that, no longer addressing the cook, but his belt, and sticking the ends through the belt, "now you won't jump out," and, raising and lowering his shoulders, so as to have his arms free, he put on the cloak, again arched his back, so as to have

his arms unhampered, adjusted the cloak under the pit of his arms, and fetched his mittens down from a shelf. "Now it is all right."

"Nikíta, you had better change your boots," said the cook, "for those you have on are no good."

Nikíta stopped, as though to recall something.

"Yes, I ought to. Well, these will do, — it is not far!"

And he ran out into the yard.

"Won't you be cold, Nikíta?" asked the mistress, as he came up to the sleigh.

"Not at all cold, — I shall be warm," replied Nikíta, beating up the straw in front of the sleigh, so as to cover his feet with it, and sticking the whip, which was useless for the good horse, into the straw.

Vasíli Andréich was already seated in the sleigh, occupying almost the whole bent back of it with the two fur coats which he wore, and, taking the reins, immediately let the horse go. Nikíta on the run jumped in on the left side and stuck out one leg.

II.

THE good stallion moved the sleigh with a slight squeak of the runners, and at a brisk pace started down the well-travelled, frozen village street.

"Where are you hanging on? Let me have the whip, Nikíta!" exclaimed Vasíli Andréich, evidently enjoying the sight of his heir, who was hanging on behind, standing on the runners. "I will show you! Run to mamma, you son of a gun."

The boy jumped down. Yellow-muzzle increased his pace and, correcting himself, passed over to a trot.

Krestý, in which Vasíli Andréich's house stood, consisted of six houses. As soon as they rode out beyond the last hut, the blacksmith's shop, they noticed that the wind was much stronger than they had expected. They could hardly see the road now. The track from the runners was immediately drifted over, and the road could be told only because it was higher than any other place. The snow whirled over the whole field, and one could not see the line where earth and heaven meet. Telyátino forest, which was always visible, only now and then appeared black through the snow dust. The wind blew from the left, stubbornly turning the mane on Yellow-muzzle's sloping fat neck in one direction, and carrying his bushy tail, which was tied in a simple knot, to one side. Nikíta's long collar, as he was sitting on the side of the wind, pressed close to his face and nose.

"He does not run as he can, — there is too much snow," said Vasíli Andréich, priding himself on his good

horse. "I once drove him to Pashútino, where he took me in half an hour."

"What?" asked Nikíta, who had not heard well behind his collar.

"To Pashútino, I say; he took me there in half an hour," shouted Vasíli Andréich.

"No use talking, a good horse!" said Nikíta.

They were silent awhile. But Vasíli Andréich felt like talking.

"Well, what do you suppose? Did I tell your wife not to give the cooper anything to drink?" Vasíli Andréich began in the same loud voice; he was so convinced that it must be flattering to Nikíta to talk with such an important and clever man as he was, and so satisfied with his jest, that it did not even occur to him that this conversation might be disagreeable for Nikíta.

Nikíta again did not catch the sound of his master's words, as it was carried away by the wind.

Vasíli Andréich repeated his jest about the cooper in his loud, distinct voice.

"God be with him, Vasíli Andréich. I do not meddle with these matters. All I care for is that she should not treat the lad badly, and as for the rest, God be with her."

"That is so," said Vasíli Andréich. "Well, are you going to buy a horse toward spring?" he began a new subject of conversation.

"There is no way out," replied Nikíta, opening the collar of the caftan and bending over in the direction of his master.

This time the conversation interested Nikíta, and he wanted to hear it all.

"The lad has grown up, — he has to plough himself; they have been hiring all the time," he said.

"Well, take the one with the lean crupper, — I will not ask much," continued Vasíli Andréich, feeling him-

self in good spirits and so attacking his favourite occupation, which absorbed all his mental powers, — horse trading.

"If you will let me have some fifteen roubles, I will buy one in the horse market," said Nikíta, who knew that a fair price for the horse with the lean crupper, which Vasíli Andréich was trying to sell him, was about seven roubles, and that Vasíli Andréich, in giving him this horse, would figure it at twenty-five, and then he would not see any money from him for half a year.

"It's a good horse. I mean it for your good, as though for myself. I don't care, let me have a loss: I am not like others. Honestly," he shouted in that voice with which he pulled the wool over the eyes of the buyers and the sellers, "it's a fine horse."

"That's so," said Nikíta, with a sigh, and having convinced himself that there was nothing else to listen to, took his hand away from the collar, which immediately covered his ear and face.

For about half an hour they travelled in silence. The wind blew through Nikíta's side and arm, where the fur was torn.

He crouched and breathed into the collar, which covered his mouth, but he still felt cold.

"Well, what do you think? Shall we go by Karamýshevo, or straight ahead?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

By the way of Karamýshevo the road was more cheerful, with good signals on both sides, but it was farther. Straight ahead it was nearer, but the road was little travelled and there were no signals, or there were poor ones and they were covered with snow.

Nikíta stopped to think a little.

"By the way of Karamýshevo it is farther, but the road is better," he said.

"But if we go straight, we have just to cross a little ravine, — we cannot lose the way, — and then through

the woods, — it is nice," said Vasíli Andréich, who wanted to travel straight ahead.

"As you please," said Nikíta, again dropping his collar.

Vasíli Andréich did so and, after travelling about half a verst, turned to the left, near a tall oak branch with here and there a dry leaf, which dangled in the wind.

After the turn the wind blew almost straight into their faces, and a light snow began to fall from above. Vasíli Andréich drove; he filled his cheeks and breathed downward, into his moustache. Nikíta was dozing off.

Thus they travelled in silence for about ten minutes. Suddenly Vasíli Andréich said something.

"What?" asked Nikíta, opening his eyes.

Vasíli Andréich made no reply, but bent forward and backward, looking in front of the horse. The horse's hair between his legs and on his neck was curled from the sweat; he was walking.

"What is it, I say?" repeated Nikíta.

"What? What?" Vasíli Andréich mocked him angrily. "I cannot see any signals, — we must have lost our way."

"Stand still, then, and I will go and look for the road," said Nikíta. Jumping lightly from the sleigh and taking the whip out of the straw, he went to the left, on the side he was sitting on.

The snow was not deep that year, so that one could walk anywhere, but here and there it was knee-deep and dropped into Nikíta's boots. Nikíta walked around, feeling with his feet and the whip, but could not find the road anywhere.

"Well?" said Vasíli Andréich, as Nikíta again came up to the sleigh.

"The road is not on this side. I must go and try on the other."

"There is a black spot in front, — go there and look," said Vasíli Andréich.

Nikíta went there, and approached that which looked black, — it was dirt which from the bared winter fields had drifted over the snow and had dyed the snow black. After having tried on the right side, Nikíta came back to the sleigh, shook the snow off himself and out of one boot, and seated himself in the sleigh.

"We must travel to the right," he said, with determination. "The wind blew against my left side, and now blows straight into my face. Go to the right," he said, with determination.

Vasíli Andréich obeyed him, and turned to the right. But still there was no road. Thus they travelled for a little while. The wind did not subside, and there fell a light snow.

"Vasíli Andréich, it seems that we have lost the road," Nikíta suddenly exclaimed, as though with pleasure. "What is this?" he said, pointing to black potato tops, which were sticking out through the snow.

Vasíli Andréich stopped the sweating horse, which was breathing heavily, drawing in its sloping sides.

"What is it?" he asked.

"We are in the Zakhárovka field. That's where we have driven to."

"Sure?" called out Vasíli Andréich.

"I am not lying, Vasíli Andréich, but telling the truth," said Nikíta. "I know it by the way the sleigh is going: we are travelling over a potato field; and here is a pile, where they heaped the tops. It is the field of the Zakhárovka plant."

"I declare we have gone astray!" said Vasíli Andréich. "What shall we do?"

"We must keep straight ahead, that is all, — we shall come out somewhere," said Nikíta. "If not to Zakhárovka, we may come to a proprietor's out-farm."

Vasíli Andréich obeyed him and let the horse go as Nikíta had ordered him. Thus they travelled for quite

awhile. At times they passed over bare sowed fields, and the sleigh thundered over clods of frozen earth. At times they travelled over stubble-fields, now over winter fields, and now over summer fields, where beneath the snow could be seen the wormwood and straw stalks tossing in the wind; at times they drove into deep and everywhere equally white and even snow, above which nothing could be seen.

The snow fell from above and sometimes rose from below. The horse was apparently fagged out; his hair was all curled and hoarfrosted from his sweat, and he went at a slow pace. Suddenly he broke through and settled in a puddle or ditch. Vasíli Andréich wanted to stop, but Nikíta cried out to him:

"Don't stop! We have got into it, and so have to get out again. Come now, dear one! Come, friend!" he cried out in a loud voice to the horse, jumping out of the sleigh and himself sticking fast in the ditch.

The horse jerked forward and at once came out on a frozen heap of earth. It was evident this was a dug trench.

"Where are we now?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

"We shall find out," replied Nikíta. "Move on, we shall certainly come to some place."

"This must be Goryáchkino forest," said Vasíli Andréich, pointing to something black, which appeared beyond the snow, in front of them.

"We shall go on, and then we shall find out what kind of a forest it is," said Nikíta.

Nikíta saw that long, dry willow leaves were borne toward him from the direction of the darkening spot, and so he knew that it was not a forest, but some settlement, but he did not want to say so. And, indeed, they had not travelled ten sázhens from the trench when trees stood out black in front of them, and a new, moaning sound was heard. Nikíta had guessed correctly. This

was not a forest, but a row of tall willow-trees, with here and there leaves trembling upon them. The willow-trees were evidently planted along the trench of a threshing-floor. When the horse reached the willows, which were monotonously whining in the wind, he suddenly rose with his fore legs higher than the sleigh, pulled his hind legs, too, out on an elevation, turned to the left, and no longer sank up to his knees into the snow. This was a road.

"Here we are," Nikíta said, "but we don't know where."

The horse no longer strayed from the road, though it was snow-drifted, and before they had travelled forty sázhens on it, they saw in black outlines the straight strip of a wicker kiln under a snow-drifted roof, from which the snow kept drifting all the time. After passing the kiln, the road turned to the wind, and they drove into a drift. But in front of them could be seen a lane between two houses, so that apparently the drift was on the road, and they had to pass over it. And as soon as they crossed the drift, they drove into a street. At the first yard stiffly frozen linen, which was hanging on a rope, was desperately fluttering in the wind: there were shirts, one red, one white, drawers, foot-rags, and a skirt. The white shirt was whirling about most furiously, waving its sleeves.

"I declare, she is a lazy woman, or she is dying, for she has not taken in the linen for the holiday," said Nikíta, as he looked at the dangling shirts.

III.

At the entrance of the street the wind blew strongly, and the road was drifted, but in the middle of the village it was quiet, warm, and cheerful. Near one yard a dog was barking at another; a woman, covering her head with a sleeveless coat, came running from somewhere and entered through the door of the hut, stopping on the threshold, in order to look at the travellers. From the middle of the village could be heard the songs of girls.

In the village there seemed to be less wind, and snow, and frost.

"Why, this is Gríshkino," said Vasíli Andréich.

"So it is," replied Nikíta.

It was, indeed, Gríshkino. It turned out that they had kept too much to the left and had travelled something like eight versts off the road, but still in the direction of their place of destination. To Goryáchkino they had to travel another five versts.

In the middle of the village they almost stumbled upon a tall man who was walking in the street.

"Who is there?" shouted this man, stopping the horse; on learning that it was Vasíli Andréich, he took hold of the shaft and, groping along it with his hands, walked up to the sleigh and seated himself on the driver's seat.

He was an acquaintance of Vasíli Andréich, Isáy by name, and was in all the surrounding country known as the biggest horse-thief.

"Oh, Vasíli Andréich! Whither does God carry you?" said Isáy, wafting against Nikíta a breath of vódka.

"We were going to Goryáchkino."

"And this is where you came to! You ought to have kept toward Malákhovo."

"Of course, we ought to, but we did not," said Vasíli Andréich, stopping his horse.

"The horse is a good one," said Isáy, examining the horse and with a habitual motion tightening the slipping knot of the bushy tail.

"Well, are you going to stay here overnight?"

"No, friend, we are obliged to go on."

"On business, no doubt. And who is he? Oh, Nikíta Stepánych!"

"I should say I am!" replied Nikíta. "Now, dear man, how can we keep from losing the road again?"

"No need of losing! Turn back, straight along the road, and when you come out, keep straight ahead. Don't take the left road. You will come out on the highway, and then to the right."

"Where is the turn from the highway? A summer sign or a winter sign?" asked Nikíta.

"A winter sign. As soon as you come out on the highway, there are some bushes, and opposite the bushes a large, curly signal oak, — there it is."

Vasíli Andréich turned his horse back, and went through the outskirts of the village.

"You had better stay overnight!" Isáy shouted after them.

But Vasíli Andréich did not answer him, and touched his horse; it did not seem hard to travel the five versts of the level road, especially since the wind had died down and the snow stopped falling.

After going back over the street, which was well-travelled, and here and there showed black spots of fresh manure, and having passed the yard with the linen, where the white shirt had got off the rope and was dangling down by one frozen sleeve, they again reached the frightfully

moaning willows and once more found themselves in the open field. The snow-storm had not only not subsided, but even seemed to have become stronger. The road was all covered with drifts, and the only way one could tell that one was on the road was by the signals. But it was difficult to make the signals out in front, because the wind blew in the face.

Vasíli Andréich half-closed his eyes, bent down his head, and watched for signals, but mainly depended on the horse, to which he gave the reins. The horse actually did not lose the road, and went, turning to the right and to the left, to follow the bends of the road, which he felt under foot, so that, although the snow kept growing stronger overhead, and the wind began to blow more strongly, the signals could be seen, now on the right, and now on the left.

Thus they travelled about ten minutes, when suddenly in front of the horse there appeared something black, which moved in the slanting screen of the wind-driven snow. Those were fellow travellers. Yellow-muzzle caught up with them, and hit his feet against the hamper of the sleigh in front of him.

"Dri-i-ive around!" somebody shouted from the sleigh.

Vasíli Andréich began to drive around. In the sleigh sat three peasants and a woman. They were apparently guests, going home from the holiday. One peasant kept whacking with a stick at the snow-covered back of the nag. Two, who were sitting in front, waved their hands and shouted something. The woman was all wrapped up and covered with snow; she sat without moving, bumping herself, in the back of the sleigh.

"Who are you?" cried out Vasíli Andréich.

"From A-a-a—!" was all that could be heard.

"From where, I say?"

"From A-a-a—!" one of the peasants shouted with all his might, but it was still impossible to make him out.

"Go on! Don't give up!" shouted another, who never stopped whacking the nag with the stick.

"Evidently they have been celebrating."

"Go on, go on! Let her go, Sémka! Move on! Keep it up!"

The sleighs struck against one another with their wings, almost caught in one another, and separated, and the peasant sleigh began to fall behind.

The shaggy, snow-covered, pot-bellied nag, breathing heavily under her low arch, was evidently using her last strength to run away from the stick that was coming down on her back, and minced with her short legs in the deep snow, which she threw up as she ran. The muzzle, apparently of a young horse, with tightly drawn nether lip, as in a fish, with spreading nostrils and ears lying down from fear, for a few seconds was in a line with Nikíta's shoulder and then began to fall behind.

"This is what liquor does," said Nikíta. "They have completely worn out the horse. They are Asiatics!"

For a few minutes could be heard the nag's heavy breathing through the nostrils and the drunken shouts of the peasants, and then the heavy breathing stopped and the sounds of the peasants were not heard. And again nothing could be heard all around them, but the wind whistling about their ears, and now and then the squeak of the runners over the wind-swept places of the road.

This meeting cheered and braced up Vasíli Andréich, and he drove the horse more boldly, without making out the signals, depending entirely on the horse.

Nikíta had nothing to do, and, as always, when he was in such a situation, dozed off, to make up for much sleep he had lost. Suddenly the horse stopped, and Nikíta almost fell down, lurching forward on his nose.

"We are again going wrong," said Vasíli Andréich.

"What is it?"

"I cannot see the signals. We must have lost the road again."

"If we have lost the road, we must find it," Nikíta said, curtly; he got up and, stepping lightly with his in-toeing feet, started once more to walk over the snow.

He walked for a long time, disappearing from view, again appearing, and again disappearing, and finally came back.

"There is no road here, — maybe it is somewhere ahead," he said, as he seated himself in the sleigh.

It was beginning to get quite dark. The snow-storm did not grow any stronger, nor did it subside.

"If we only could hear those peasants," said Vasíli Andréich.

"They have not caught up with us, so we must have gone far astray. And maybe they have lost the road themselves," said Nikíta.

"Whither shall we go?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

"We must let the horse go," said Nikíta. "He will take us right. Let me have the reins."

Vasíli Andréich gave up the reins, more willingly so because his fingers in the warm gloves were beginning to freeze.

Nikíta took the reins and only held them, trying not to move them and rejoicing at the good sense of his favourite animal. Indeed, the clever horse, turning now one, now another ear, now to one side, and now to another, began to turn around.

"All he needs is speaking," Nikíta kept saying. "See what he is doing! Go on, go on, you know better! That's it!"

The wind began to blow from behind, and it grew warmer.

"He is clever," Nikíta kept rejoicing at the horse.

"Kirgíz is strong, but stupid. But he, — just see what he is doing with his ears. He does not need any telegraph, — he can scent a verst off."

Less than half an hour passed, when ahead there was, indeed, something black, — either a village or a forest, — and on the right side there again appeared the signals. They had evidently come out on the road.

"Why, this is again Gríshkino," Nikíta suddenly exclaimed.

Indeed, on their left now was the same kiln, from which the snow drifted, and farther on was the same rope with the frozen linen, the shirts and drawers, which kept flapping as desperately in the wind as before.

They again drove into the street, and again it was quiet, warm, and cheerful, and again could be seen the manure-covered road; again voices and songs were heard, and again the dog barked. It was already so dark that in several windows fires could be seen.

In the middle of the street Vasíli Andréich turned his horse to a large house consisting of two brick parts, and stopped at the porch.

Nikíta went up to the snow-drifted, lighted window, in the light of which sparkled the flitting snowflakes, and knocked at it with his whip butt.

"Who is there?" a voice replied to Nikíta's knock.

"From Kresty̋, the Brekhunóvs, dear man," replied Nikíta. "Just come out for a minute!"

The person went away from the window, and about two minutes later one could hear the door in the vestibule come open, then the latch clicked in the outer door, and, holding the door against the wind, there appeared an old peasant with a white beard, in a short fur coat thrown over his white holiday shirt, and after him a lad in red shirt and leather boots.

"Is it you, Andréich?" asked the old man.

"We have lost our way, friend," said Vasíli Andréich.

"We wanted to go to Goryáchkino, but found our way here. We went a second time, but again lost our way."

"I declare, you have gone astray," said the old man. "Petrúshka, go and open the gate!" he turned to the lad in the red shirt.

"I will do it," replied the lad, in a cheerful voice, and ran into the vestibule.

"We do not mean to stay overnight, friend," said Vasíli Andréich.

"You can't travel, — it is night-time. Stay here!"

"I should like to, but I have to go. Business, friend, — I can't."

"Well, warm yourself at least, — you have come in time for the samovár," said the old man.

"It will not do any harm to get warm," said Vasíli Andréich. "It will not be any darker, and the moon will come out and light up things. Had we not better go in and warm ourselves, Nikíta?"

"Well, it will not do any harm to get warm," said Nikíta, who was stiff with cold and anxious to warm his cold limbs in a warm room.

Vasíli Andréich went into the room with the old man, and Nikíta drove through the gate which the lad had opened, and moved the horse under the penthouse of the shed, which place the lad had pointed out to him. The shed was filled with manure, and the high arch caught in a beam. The hens, with the cock, who had settled to roost there, started cackling in dissatisfaction, and pattered with their feet over the beam. The disturbed sheep, stepping with their hoofs on the frozen manure, fled to one side. A dog, whining desperately, in fright and anger, in puppy fashion, began to bark at the stranger.

Nikíta talked to all of them: he excused himself to the hens and assured them that he would not disturb them again; he rebuked the sheep for being frightened without

knowing why, and kept admonishing the dog all the time that he was tying his horse.

"Now it will be all right," he said, shaking the snow off himself. "How he barks!" he added, to the dog. "That will do! Come, now, stop, foolish dog! You are only agitating yourself," he said. "We are no thieves, we are friends."

"These are, as it says, the three domestic counsellors," said the lad, with his powerful hand thrusting the sleigh, which was out in the open, into the penthouse.

"What counsellors?" asked Nikíta.

"So it is written in Púlson: a thief steals to the house, — the dog barks, — that means, don't dally, look out. The cock crows, — that means, get up. The cat washes herself, — that means, a dear guest: get ready to receive him," said the lad, smiling.

Petrúshka could read and write, and knew almost by heart the only book he had, Páulson's text-book, and he was fond, especially when he had had something to drink, as to-day, of quoting from it utterances which, he thought, fitted the occasion.

"That's so," said Nikíta.

"I suppose you are cold, uncle," added Petrúshka.

"I am," said Nikíta.

And they went across the yard and the vestibule into the house.

IV.

THE farm where Vasíli Andréich stopped was one of the wealthiest in the village. The family had five allotments, and, besides, rented other land. There were on this farm six horses, three cows, two heifers, about twenty sheep. There were in all twenty persons in this family: four married sons, six grandchildren, of which only Petrúshka was married, two great-grandchildren, three orphans, and four daughters-in-law with their children. This was one of the extremely few farms which remained still undivided; but even in them there was going on the silent, internal work of dissension, which, as always, began among the women, and which would inevitably soon lead to division. Two sons were living as water-carriers in Moscow, and one was a soldier. At home were now the old man, his wife, his second son, the master, and his eldest son, who had come from Moscow for the holiday, and all the women and children; besides the family there was also one of the neighbours, — a guest, — and a friend.

Over the table, in the room, hung a lamp, with an upper shade, which brightly lighted up the tea-dishes, a bottle of vódka, a luncheon, and the brick walls, which were in the far corner adorned with images on either side of which were pictures. On the first seat, behind the table, sat Vasíli Andréich, in his short black fur coat only, licking his frozen moustache and observing the people and the room about him with his bulging, hawk eyes. Beside Vasíli Andréich, there sat at the table the bald-headed, white-bearded old man, in a white homespun shirt; beside him, in a fine chintz shirt, with mighty

back and shoulders, was the son who had come from Moscow for the holiday, and another son, the broad-shouldered elder brother, who was the master of the house, and a lean, red-haired peasant, a neighbour.

The peasants had had something to drink and eat, and were now getting ready to drink tea, and the samovár was already crooning, as it stood on the floor near the oven. On the hanging beds and on the oven, children could be seen. On the bed bench a woman sat over a cradle. The old man's wife, with tiny wrinkles all over her face, which ran in every direction, and which wrinkled even her lips, waited on Vasíli Andréich.

Just as Nikíta entered the room, she was carrying up to the guest some vódka, which she had poured into a tumbler of thick glass.

"Do not misjudge us, Vasíli Andréich; we must greet you," she said. "Take it, my dear."

The sight and odour of the vódka, especially now that he was cold and tired, very much confused Nikíta. He frowned, and, shaking the snow off his cap and caftan, stood up opposite the images and, as though not seeing any one, made three times the sign of the cross and bowed to the images, then, turning back to the old man, the master, bowed, first to him, then to all those who were at the table, then to the women, who were standing near the oven, and, saying, "With the holiday," began to take off his wraps, without looking at the table.

"But you are covered with hoarfrost, uncle," said the elder brother, as he looked at Nikíta's snow-covered face, eyes, and beard.

Nikíta took off his caftan, shook it out, hung it up near the oven, and walked over to the table. He, too, was offered some vódka. There was a minute of agonizing struggle; he came very near taking the glass and pouring the fragrant, light-coloured moisture down his throat; but he glanced at Vasíli Andréich, recalled his vow, recalled

the boots which he had sold for drink, recalled the cooper, recalled the boy, for whom he had promised to buy a horse by spring, and so sighed and declined the vódka.

"I do not drink, thank you very much," he said, frowning, and sat down on a bench near the second window.

"Why not?" asked the elder brother.

"I don't, and that's all," said Nikíta, without raising his eyes, looking awry at his scanty moustache and beard, and thawing out the icicles from them.

"It is not good for him," said Vasíli Andréich, biting off a cracknel after the glass which he had drunk.

"Well, then you will have some tea," said the kindly old woman. "I am afraid you are cold. Why are you women so slow with the samovár?"

"It is ready," replied a young woman, and, dusting off with her apron the boiling covered samovár, she with difficulty brought it up to the table, raised it, and set it down with a thud.

In the meantime Vasíli Andréich told them how they had lost their way, how they had twice come back to the same village, how they had wandered around, and how they had met the peasants. The peasants wondered, explained where and why they had lost their way, and who the drunken peasants were whom they had met, and taught them how to travel.

"A little child would find the way from here to Molchánovka, — all you have to do is to find the turn from the highway, — you will see a bush there. But you did not go far enough," said the neighbour.

"You had better stay overnight. The women will make beds for you," the old woman admonished them.

"You had better travel in the morning, — it is nice then," affirmed the old man.

"Impossible, friend, — business!" said Vasíli Andréich. "If you miss your hour, you won't make up for it

in a year," he added, as he thought of the grove and of the merchants who might get ahead of him in this bargain. "We shall get there, shall we not?" he said, turning to Nikíta.

Nikíta for a long time made no reply, as though all the time busy thawing out his moustache and beard.

"We may lose the road again," he said, gloomily.

Nikíta was gloomy, because he was very anxious to get some vódka, and the one thing which could drown this desire was tea, and he had not yet been offered any tea.

"If we only get as far as the turn, we won't lose the way, — the road then lies straight through the forest," said Vasíli Andréich.

"It is your business, Vasíli Andréich. If you want to go, I don't care," said Nikíta, taking the glass of tea which was handed to him.

"We shall drink our tea, and then, march."

Nikíta said nothing, but only shook his head and, carefully pouring his tea into the saucer, began over the steam to warm his fingers, which were always swollen from work. Then, biting off a tiny piece of sugar, he bowed to the master and the mistress of the house, and said:

"May you be well," and he sucked in the warming liquid.

"If some one would take us as far as the turn!" said Vasíli Andréich.

"Well, that can be done," said the eldest son. "Petrúshka will hitch up and take you to the turn."

"Hitch up, then, friend, and I will be thankful to you for it."

"Why are you in such a hurry, dear one!" said the kindly old woman. "We are glad to have you."

"Petrúshka, go and hitch up the mare," said the elder brother.

"I will," said Petrúshka, smiling; and, immediately pulling his cap off a peg, he ran out to hitch up.

While the horse was being harnessed, the conversation passed over to what it had stopped at, when Vasíli Andréich reached the window. The old man was complaining to his neighbour, the elder, about his third son, who had sent him nothing for the holiday, but had sent his wife a French kerchief.

"The young people are getting unmanageable," said the old man.

"Unmanageable?" said the friend, "there is no getting along with them! They have become awfully clever. There is Demóchkin, — he broke his father's arm. It is all from too much sense, I suppose."

Nikíta listened and watched their faces and evidently wanted to take part in their conversation, but he was wholly occupied with the tea and only approvingly shook his head. He drank one glass after another, and he grew warmer and warmer, and happier and happier. The conversation lasted for a long time, all the while about one and the same thing, about the harm of division, and the conversation was apparently not in the abstract, but had reference to the division in this house, — a division which the second son, who was sitting there and keeping silent, was demanding. This was obviously a sore spot, and the question interested all the people of the house, but out of propriety they did not discuss their private affair. But finally the old man did not hold out, and with tears in his eyes declared that he would permit no division so long as he was alive, that, thanks to God, he had the house, and that if he divided up, they would all go a-begging.

"That's the way it was with the Matvyéevs," said the neighbour. "They had a house that was a house; they divided up, and now nobody has anything."

"That's the way you want it to be," the old man said, turning to his son.

His son made no reply, and there ensued an awkward

silence. This silence was interrupted by Petrúshka, who had hitched up and had several minutes ago returned to the room and had kept smiling all the time.

"There is a fable in Púlson," he said: "a father gave his sons a broom to break; they could not break it together, but broke it easily by single rods. It is just like this," he said, smiling with his whole mouth. "Ready!" he said.

"If it is ready, we shall go," said Vasíli Andréich. "And you, grandfather, don't give in as to the division. You have earned it, and you are the master. Complain to the justice of the peace. He will tell you what the law is."

"He is carrying on so, and carrying on so," the old man said, still sticking to the same subject, "that there is no getting along with him. Just as though the devil were in him."

In the meantime Nikíta, having finished his fifth glass of tea, still did not turn it over, but laid it down sidewise, hoping that they would fill it again. But there was no more water in the samovár, and the hostess did not fill him another glass, and besides, Vasíli Andréich was putting on his wraps. There was nothing to be done. Nikíta himself got up, put back into the sugar-bowl the piece of sugar which he had nibbled at from all sides, with the skirt of his coat wiped his face, which was wet with perspiration, and went to put on his cloak.

After he had put it on, he drew a deep sigh and, thanking the host and the hostess and bidding them farewell, went out of the warm, light room into the dark, cold vestibule, in which the wind moaned and the snow was carried through the chinks of the trembling door, and from there into the dark yard.

Petrúshka, in a fur coat, was standing with his horse in the middle of the yard, repeating, with a smile, verses from Páulson. He said:

"Storm and mist beshroud the heaven,
Drifts of snow fly up and whirl;
Like a wolf the storm is howling,
And now moaning like a girl."

Nikíta approvingly shook his head and straightened out the reins.

The old man, in seeing Vasíli Andréich out, carried a lantern into the vestibule, to show him the way, but the wind put it out at once. It could be noticed in the yard that the snow-storm was now worse than before.

"But this is bad weather," thought Vasíli Andréich; "we may not get there, — but I can't, business! And I am ready to go, and the host's horse is hitched up. We shall get there, God willing!"

The host, too, thought that he ought not to travel, but he had advised him to stay, and no attention had been paid to him. There was no sense in asking again. "Maybe I am so timid on account of my old age, and they will get there," he thought. "At least we shall go to bed in time. There will be no trouble."

Petrúshka did not even think of the danger: he knew the road and all the places about so well, and, besides, the verses about "drifts of snow fly up and whirl" braced him so much because they expressed precisely what was taking place in the yard. Nikíta, however, did not want to travel at all; but he had long ago become accustomed to not having his own will and to serving others, and so no one kept the travellers back.

V.

Vasíli Andréich walked over to the sleigh, with difficulty making out in the darkness where he was, climbed into it, and took the reins.

"Lead us!" he shouted.

Petrúshka was kneeling in his sledge, and he started his horse. Yellow-muzzle, who had been neighing for quite awhile, since he knew that a mare was ahead of him, rushed forward, and they drove out into the street. They drove again through the outskirt of the village, and along the same road, past the yard with the frozen linen hanging out, but the linen was no longer visible; past the same shed, against which the snow had now drifted almost up to the roof, and from which endless snow was pouring; past the same gloomily moaning, whistling, and bending willow-trees, and again entered into the sea of snow, which was agitated above and below. The wind was so strong that when it blew from the side and the travellers settled themselves against it, it made the sleigh careen and turned the horse to one side. Petrúshka drove his good mare in front at an easy trot, and kept shouting merrily. Yellow-muzzle ran after the mare.

Having travelled thus for about ten minutes, Petrúshka turned around and shouted something. Neither Vasíli Andréich nor Nikíta heard through the wind what he said, but they guessed that they had arrived at the turn. Indeed, Petrúshka turned to the right, and the wind, which had blown from the side, again began to blow in their face, and on the right, through the snow, something black could be seen. This was the bush at the turn.

"Well, God aid you!"

"Thank you, Petrúshka."

"'Storm and mist beshroud the heaven,'" shouted Petrúshka, as he disappeared.

"What a poet!" said Vasíli Andréich, pulling the reins.

"Yes, he is a fine lad, a real peasant," said Nikíta.

They drove on.

Nikíta wrapped himself and ducked his head down between his shoulders, so that his small beard hugged his neck; he sat quietly, trying not to lose any of the heat which he had obtained in the house with his tea. He saw in front of him the straight lines of the shafts, which kept constantly deceiving him, as they seemed to him to be the well-travelled road, and he saw the wavering crupper of the horse with his tail tied in a knot and hanging to one side, and farther ahead, the high arch and the shaking head and neck of the horse with the waving mane. Now and then he noticed the signals, so that he knew that so far they had been travelling on the road, and he had nothing to do.

Vasíli Andréich drove, letting the horse choose his own road. But Yellow-muzzle, in spite of his having sighed in the village, ran unwillingly, and seemed to turn away from the road, so that Vasíli Andréich corrected him several times.

"Here, on the right, is one signal, and here another, and a third," Vasíli Andréich counted, "and in front of us is the forest," he thought, as he looked at the black spot in front of him; but what had appeared to him to be a forest was only a bush. They passed the bush, they went another twenty sázhens, but there was no fourth signal, and there was no forest. "No doubt we shall soon have the forest," thought Vasíli Andréich, and, excited by the wine and the tea, he did not stop, but touched the reins, and the obedient, good animal obeyed, and now at a pace

and now at a slow trot ran whither he was sent, though he knew that he was not going where it was necessary to go. Ten minutes passed, and there was still no forest.

"We have again lost our way," said Vasíli Andréich, stopping his horse.

Nikíta silently climbed out of the sleigh and, holding up his cloak, which now stuck to him in the wind, and now blew away from him and came near falling off, started to walk over the snow; he went to one side, and then to the other. Three or four times he was completely lost from sight. Finally he returned and took the reins out of Vasíli Andréich's hands.

"We must go to the right," he said, sternly and with determination, as he turned the horse.

"Very well, let it be to the right," said Vasíli Andréich, giving him the reins and sticking his frozen hands into his sleeves.

Nikíta made no reply.

"Come, now, friend, do your best!" he shouted to the horse, but the horse, in spite of the shaking of the reins, went only at a walk.

The snow was here and there knee-deep, and the sleigh went by jerks, with every motion of the horse.

Nikíta got the whip, which was hanging over the front, and struck the horse. The good horse, which was unaccustomed to the whip, yanked the sleigh, went at a trot, but immediately passed over to an amble and walk. Thus they travelled for about five minutes. It was dark and the snow fell from above and rose from below, so that it was at times impossible to see the arch. The sleigh seemed now and then to stand still, and the field to run backwards. Suddenly the horse came to an abrupt standstill, apparently noticing something wrong in front of him. Nikíta again jumped out, throwing down the reins, and went ahead of the horse, to see what it was that had brought him to a standstill, but he had barely made a step

in front of the horse, when his feet slipped and he rolled down an incline.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa," he said to himself as he fell, and tried to stop himself, but he could not, and he stopped only when his feet cut their way into a thick layer of snow which had been blown up from the bottom of the ravine. The overhanging snow-drift, disturbed by Nikíta's fall, caved in over him and fell behind his collar.

"What is the matter with you?" Nikíta said, reproachfully addressing the drift and the ravine, and shaking the snow out from behind his collar.

"Nikíta, oh, Nikíta!" Vasíli Andréich called from above.

But Nikíta made no reply.

He had no time: he was shaking off the snow; then he looked for the whip, which he had dropped as he rolled down the incline. When he found his whip, he tried to climb straight back, where he had rolled down, but there was no possibility of getting up; he kept rolling back, so that he had to go down-hill, to find a way up. About three sázhens from the place where he had rolled down, he with difficulty crawled up-hill, and followed the edge of the ravine back to the place where the horse should have been. He did not see either the horse or the sleigh; but as he was walking against the wind, he heard, before seeing anything, Vasíli Andréich's shouts and Yellow-muzzle's neighing, for they had both made him out.

"I am coming, I am coming; what makes you yell so?" he said.

Only when he had come up to the sleigh did he see the horse and Vasíli Andréich, who was standing near it and looking enormous.

"Where in the devil have you been? We have to go back. Let us get back to Gríshkino," the master began angrily to reproach Nikíta.

"I should be glad to go back, Vasíli Andréich, but where shall we go? Here is such a terrible ravine that, if we get into it, we shall never get out. I had such a fall that I barely got out alive."

"Well, are we going to stay here? We have to go somewhere," said Vasíli Andréich.

Nikíta did not say anything. He seated himself in the sleigh, with his back to the wind, took off his boots and shook out the snow which had fallen into them, and, getting a handful of straw, carefully stopped a hole inside his left boot.

Vasíli Andréich was silent, as though leaving everything now to Nikíta. After putting on his boots, Nikíta stuck his feet into the sleigh, again put on his mittens, took the reins, and turned the horse alongside the ravine. But they had not travelled one hundred steps, when the horse again stood still. In front of him was another ravine.

Nikíta again climbed out and again trudged over the snow. He walked for quite awhile. Finally he appeared from the opposite side to the one from which he had started.

"Andréich, are you alive?" he shouted.

"Here!" answered Vasíli Andréich. "Well, what is it?"

"I can't make out. It is dark, — nothing but ravines. We must again travel against the wind."

They started again; again Nikíta went trudging over the snow. He seated himself again, and again trudged, and finally stopped, out of breath, near the sleigh.

"Well, what is it?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

"I am all worn out, and the horse is stopping, — that's what it is."

"What is to be done?"

"Well, wait."

Nikíta went away again, and soon came back.

"Follow me," he said, walking in front of the horse.

Vasíli Andréich no longer gave any orders, but submissively did Nikíta's bidding.

"Here, after me," shouted Nikíta, walking swiftly to the right and seizing Yellow-muzzle by the reins and directing him somewhere down into a snow-drift.

The horse at first refused to go, but then jerked forward, hoping to jump across the drift, but failed and settled in it up to the collar.

"Get out!" Nikíta shouted to Vasíli Andréich, who continued to sit in the sleigh, and, taking hold of one shaft, began to push the sleigh down toward the horse. "It is hard, friend," he addressed Yellow-muzzle, "but what is to be done? Just a little pull! Come now, come now, just a little bit!" he shouted.

The horse jerked once, then another time, but still did not get out, and again stopped, as though considering something.

"Friend, this won't do," Nikíta admonished Yellow-muzzle. "Just a little more!"

Again Nikíta tugged at the shaft on his side. Vasíli Andréich did the same on his. The horse moved his head, then gave a sudden jerk.

"Come now, you will not drown, don't be afraid!" cried Nikíta.

A jump, a second, a third, and finally the horse got out of the drift, and stopped, breathing heavily and shaking off the snow. Nikíta wanted to lead on, but Vasíli Andréich was so much out of breath in his two fur coats that he could not walk, and threw himself into the sleigh.

"Let me rest awhile," he said, loosening the kerchief with which he had in the village tied up the collar of his fur coat.

"It's all right here; lie there," said Nikíta, "and I will lead ahead," and with Vasíli Andréich in the sleigh he led the horse by the bridle about ten steps down, and then up again, and he stopped.

The spot where Nikíta stopped was not in the ravine, where the snow which was swept from the hillocks had lodged so as to cover them completely; but it was none the less partly protected against the wind by the edge of the ravine. There were moments when the wind seemed to die down a little; but this did not last long, and, as though to make up for this rest, the storm swept down later with tenfold force, and bore down and whirled worse than ever. There was such a gust of wind at the moment when Vasíli Andréich, getting his breath back, climbed out of the sleigh and walked over to Nikíta, in order to speak about what they should do. Both involuntarily bent their heads and waited before speaking, until the fury of the gust should have passed. Yellow-muzzle, too, angrily let his ears drop and shook his head. As soon as the gust subsided a little, Nikíta took off his mittens, which he stuck into his belt, breathed into his hands and began to unstrap the bridle from the arch.

"What are you doing there?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

"I am unhitching, what else? I have no more strength," Nikíta answered, as though to excuse himself.

"Sha'n't we get out anywhere?"

"No, we sha'n't, and we shall only wear out the horse. The dear one is not himself now," said Nikíta, pointing to the horse, which was standing submissively, ready for anything, and breathing heavily with his sloping, wet sides. "We have to stay here overnight," he repeated, as though getting ready to stay overnight in an inn, and began to loosen the collar-strap.

The clamp sprang open.

"Sha'n't we freeze to death?" said Vasíli Andréich.

"Well, if I do, I sha'n't refuse," said Nikíta.

VI.

VASÍLI ANDRÉICH was quite warm in his two fur coats, especially after he had tried to get through the drift; but the frost ran up and down his back when he understood that he would really have to stay there overnight. To calm himself, he sat down in the sleigh, and began to take out his cigarettes and matches.

In the meantime Nikíta unharnessed the horse. He unstrapped the belly-band and the saddle-straps, took out the reins, loosened the collar-straps, took out the arch, and kept all the time talking to the horse, to encourage him.

"Come out now, come," he said, taking him out from between the shafts. "We will tie you up here. I'll put some straw under you, and I'll take off the bridle," he said, while doing what he said. "You'll have a bite, and you'll feel better."

But Yellow-muzzle was apparently not quieted by Nikíta's talk, and was agitated: he kept stepping now on one foot, and now on another, pressed close to the sleigh, standing with his back against the wind, and rubbed his head against Nikíta's sleeve.

As though not to refuse Nikíta's treatment of straw, which Nikíta had shoved under his nose, Yellow-muzzle once jerked out a handful of straw from the sleigh, but immediately decided that this was no time for straw, and so dropped it, and the wind scattered it in a twinkle and covered it with snow.

"Now we will make a sign," said Nikíta. Turning the sleigh toward the wind, and tying up the shafts with

the saddle-strap, he raised them up and drew them close to the foot-board. "If we are buried in the snow, good people will see the shafts, and will dig us out," said Nikíta, clapping his mittens together and putting them on. "That's the way the old people taught me."

Vasíli Andréich in the meantime opened his fur coat and covered himself with its skirts, and began to rub one sulphur match after another against the steel box; but his hands trembled, and the lighted matches one after another, even before burning up brightly, or at the very moment that he carried them to the cigarette, were blown out by the wind. Finally one match caught fire and for a moment lighted up the fur of his coat, his hand with the gold ring on the inwardly bent forefinger, and the snow-covered straw which peeped out underneath the matting, and the cigarette caught fire. He puffed at it two or three times, swallowed the smoke, breathed it out through his moustache, and wanted to take another puff, but the tobacco with the fire was caught in a gust and carried away in the same direction as the straw.

But even these few swallows of the tobacco smoke cheered up Vasíli Andréich.

"If we have to stay here overnight,—let it be so!" he said, with determination. "Wait, I'll make a flag," he said, taking up the kerchief, which he had loosened from his collar and had thrown down in the sleigh; he took off his gloves, stood up on the foot-board of the sleigh, and, stretching forward, in order to reach up to the saddle-strap, tightly tied the kerchief to it near the shaft.

The kerchief immediately began to flutter desperately, now sticking to the shaft, now blowing away, stretching out, and flapping.

"See how well it is done!" said Vasíli Andréich, admiring his work, as he let himself down into the sleigh. "It would be warmer together, but there is no room for both of us," he said.

"I will find a place," replied Nikíta, "only I have to cover the horse first, for the dear one is all in a sweat. Let me have it!" he added, and, walking over to the sleigh, he pulled the matting away from underneath Vasíli Andréich.

When he had pulled it out, he doubled it, and, throwing off the crupper and taking off the saddle-bolster, covered Yellow-muzzle with it.

"You will be warmer now, silly one," he said, putting the saddle-bolster and the crupper back over the matting. "You won't need the blanket, will you? And let me have a little straw," said Nikíta, after finishing this work and again walking up to the sleigh.

And taking both away from underneath Vasíli Andréich, he went to the back of the sleigh, burrowed a hole for himself in the snow, put the straw into it, and pulling his cap over his face, and wrapping himself in the caftan, and covering himself with the blanket, sat down on the straw bed, leaning against the bast back of the sleigh, which protected him against the wind and the snow.

Vasíli Andréich disapprovingly shook his head at what Nikíta was doing, as he in general did not approve of the ignorance and stupidity of any peasant, and began to arrange himself for the night.

He straightened out what straw there was left in the sleigh, put a lot of it under him, and, sticking his hands into his sleeves, rested his head at the front of the sleigh, where he was protected against the wind.

He did not feel like sleeping. He lay there thinking: he kept thinking of one thing, which formed the only aim, meaning, joy, and pride of his life, — of how much money he had made and how much more he could make; how much other people, whom he knew, had earned and now possessed, and how these others had made their money, and how he could, like them, make as much. The purchase of the Goryáchkino forest was to him an

affair of great moment. He expected to get rich at once from this forest, to make, probably, ten thousand. And he began mentally to estimate the value of the forest, which he had seen in the fall, and in which he had counted all the trees on an area of two desyatínas.

"The oak will be good for runners; and then the beams; and there will still be left some thirty sázhens to the desyatína," he said to himself. "There will be left at the least two hundred and a quarter to each desyatína. Fifty-six desyatínas, — fifty-six hundreds, and fifty-six hundreds, and fifty-six tens, and again fifty-six tens, and fifty-six fives." He saw that it amounted to at least twelve thousand, but he was unable without the abacus to make it out exactly. "Still, I won't give ten thousand; I will give eight, with the deduction of the clearings. I will bribe the surveyor, — I will give him one hundred, or even one hundred and fifty; he will make out some five desyatínas of clearing. He will let me have it for eight. I'll throw three thousand at once into his face. That will soften him surely," he thought, feeling the pocketbook in his pocket with the upper part of his arm. "God knows, how we have lost our way! The forest ought to be here and the guard-house. We should be hearing the dogs. They don't bark, the accursed ones, when you want them to."

He removed the collar from his ear, and began to listen; there could be heard the same whistling of the wind and the flapping of the kerchief, and the pattering of the falling snow against the bast of the sleigh. He covered himself again. "If I knew for sure, we could stay here overnight. Well, we shall get there to-morrow. It will be only one day lost. They will not travel in such weather, either." And he recalled that on the ninth he was to receive money from the butcher for the steers. "He intended to come himself; he will not find me at home, — my wife will not know how to receive the

money. She is very ignorant. She does not know the right way to act," he continued to think, as he recalled that on the day before she had not known how to act in the presence of the rural judge, who had called on him for the holiday. "Of course, she is a woman! She has not seen anything! What kind of a house did we have, when my parents were alive? Just a wealthy peasant's house; a groats-sheller and an inn, — and that was all the property. And what have I done in fifteen years? A shop, two taverns, a mill, a grain-store, two rented estates, a house, and a granary under tin roofs," he thought, with pride. "It is different from what it was in the time of my father. Whose name is everywhere known in the district? Brekhunóv's!

"And why is this so? Because I attend to business, I work harder than others, who are lazy or busy themselves with foolish things. I do not sleep at nights. Storm or not, I go out. Well, that's the way to do business. They think that it is just play to make money. No, you have to work and trouble your head. And you have to stay overnight in the open, and not sleep nights. How your pillow is tossed under your head from much thinking," he reflected, proudly. "And people imagine that it is luck that makes men. There, the Mirónovs have millions now. Why? Work, and God will give you. If God only grants us health!"

And the thought that he, too, might be such a millionaire as Mirónov, who began with nothing, so agitated Vasíli Andréich that he felt the need of talking with somebody. But there was no one to talk to. If he could reach Goryáchkino, he would talk with the landed proprietor, — he would show him a thing or two.

"How it blows! There will be such a drift that we shall not be able to get out in the morning," he thought, listening to the gust of the wind, which blew against the front of the sleigh, and bent it, and whisked the snow

against the bast. He rose a little and looked around: in the white, agitated darkness could be seen only Yellow-muzzle's black-looking head and his back, which was covered with the flapping matting, and his thick knotted tail, while all around, in front, behind, there was everywhere a monotonous, agitated darkness, which at times seemed barely lifted, and at times again more dense.

"I had no business listening to Nikíta," he thought. "We ought to be travelling, — we should somehow get somewhere. We could get back to Gríshkino, and could stay overnight at Tarás's. We shall have to stay here all night. What good could come from this? Well, God rewards for labours, and gives nothing to vagabonds, lazy-bones, or fools. I must have a smoke!" He sat up, took out his cigarette-holder, lay with his belly downward, covering the fire from the wind with the skirt of his coat, but the wind none the less found its way in and put out one match after another. Finally, he managed to light one, and he began to smoke. He was very much pleased to have at last succeeded. Though it was the wind that smoked the most of the cigarette, he none the less took three or four puffs, and he again felt more cheerful. He again lay back against the sleigh, wrapped himself up, and began once more to bring back memories and reveries, and suddenly lost his consciousness and fell asleep.

But suddenly it was as though something gave him a push and woke him up. Whether it was Yellow-muzzle who had jerked out some straw under him, or something within him agitated him, he awoke, and his heart began to knock so rapidly and so strongly that it seemed to him that the sleigh was shaking under him. He opened his eyes. Around him all was as before, but it seemed to him to be lighter.

"It is growing lighter," he thought, "no doubt it is not far from daylight." But he immediately recalled that it was lighter because the moon was up. He raised himself

a little and looked first at the horse. Yellow-muzzle was still standing with his back against the wind, and was all a-tremble. The snow-covered matting was turned to one side, the crupper had slipped down, and the snow-covered head with the fluttering forelock and mane could now be made out. Vasíli Andréich leaned against the back of the sleigh and glanced at the horse. Nikíta was still sitting in the same posture in which he had been sitting before. The blanket, with which he had covered himself, and his feet were thickly covered with snow.

"I am afraid the peasant will freeze to death; he has miserable clothes on. They will make me responsible for him. What shiftless people they are! Truly ignorant," thought Vasíli Andréich. He felt like taking the matting off the horse and covering Nikíta with it, but it was cold to get up or move around, and he was afraid the horse might freeze to death. "What did I take him for? It is all her silliness!" thought Vasíli Andréich, as he recalled his wife, whom he did not love, and he again rolled over to his former place in the front part of the sleigh. "Uncle once sat the whole night in the snow, just like me," he thought, "and he was all right. Well, when they dug out Sevastyán," another example occurred to him, "he was dead, as stiff as a frozen carcass."

"If I had remained overnight in Gríshkino, nothing would have happened." And, wrapping himself carefully so that the warmth of the fur might not be wasted, but might warm him in the neck, at the knees, and in the soles of his feet, he closed his eyes, trying once more to fall asleep. But, no matter how much he tried now, he was unable to forget himself, but, on the contrary, felt himself entirely cheerful and animated. He began once more to count up his profit, the debts people owed him, and again boasted to himself and rejoiced at himself and at his position; but everything was now constantly interrupted by furtive fear and the annoying thought that he

had not done right in not staying in Gríshkino. "I should be lying on a bench and be warm now." He turned around several times and adjusted himself, trying to find a more comfortable position, which would be protected from the wind, but he felt all the time uncomfortable; he raised himself again, changed his position, wrapped his legs, closed his eyes, and grew silent. But either his cramped feet in their strong felt boots began to pain him, or the wind blew through, and he, lying awhile, again, with anger at himself, recalled how he might have been sleeping now peacefully in the warm hut at Gríshkino, and he got up again, tossed about, wrapped himself, and again lay down.

At one time Vasíli Andréich was sure he heard the distant crowing of a cock. He was happy, opened his fur coat, and began to listen intently, but, no matter how much he strained his hearing, he could not hear anything but the sound of the wind, which whistled in the shafts and flapped the kerchief, and the sound of the snow swishing against the bast of the sleigh.

Nikíta remained sitting in the same posture that he had taken in the evening, and did not even make any reply to the words of Vasíli Andréich, who called to him two or three times. "He does not worry much,—no doubt he is asleep," Vasíli Andréich thought in anger as he looked over the back of his sleigh at Nikíta, who was covered with a thick layer of snow.

Vasíli Andréich got up and lay down again about twenty times. It seemed to him that there would be no end to this night. "Now it must be near to morning," he once thought, as he got up and looked around. "I will look at my watch. It will make me cold to unwrap myself. Well, when I know that it is near morning, I shall feel more at ease. We shall hitch up again."

In the depth of his heart Vasíli Andréich knew that it could not yet be morning, but he began to become more

and more timid, and wanted at one and the same time to verify and to deceive himself. He carefully slipped the hooks off the eyes of his fur coat, and, putting his hand in the bosom of his coat, rummaged for a long time before he found his waistcoat. He with difficulty drew his silver watch with the enamelled flower design from his pocket, and tried to make out the time. He could not see anything without light. He again lay face downward on his elbows and knees, and just as when he had lighted his cigarette took out the matches and began to strike them. Now he went to work in a more methodical manner, and, feeling with his fingers for a match with the greatest amount of phosphorus, lighted it at once. He pushed the face of the watch toward the light, and when he looked at it he did not believe his eyes. It was only ten minutes past twelve. There was yet a whole night ahead of him.

"Oh, what a long night!" thought Vasíli Andréich, feeling the cold run up his spine; and, wrapping himself and covering himself again, he pressed into the corner of the sleigh, preparing himself to wait in patience. Suddenly he clearly heard a new, live sound through the monotonous noise of the wind. The sound increased evenly, and, upon reaching complete clearness, began just as evenly to die down. There was no doubt but that this was a wolf. And this wolf was so near that with the wind it was possible to hear how he, moving his jaws, changed the sound of his voice. Vasíli Andréich threw back his collar and listened attentively. Yellow-muzzle, too, listened intently, pricking his ears, and, when the wolf ended his tune, changed the position of his feet and gave a cautioning snort. After this Vasíli Andréich was absolutely unable to fall asleep, or even to calm himself. No matter how much he tried to think of his calculations, his business, and his fame, and of his worth and wealth, terror took even more possession of him, and above all his

thoughts hovered, and to all his thoughts was added the thought as to why he had not stayed for the night at Gríshkino.

"The devil take the forest! I have, thank God, enough business without it. Oh, if I could but pass the night!" he said to himself. "They say that drunken people freeze to death," he thought, "and I have had something to drink." And, watching his sense of feeling, he noticed that he was beginning to tremble, not knowing himself why he was trembling, whether from cold or from fear. He tried to cover himself and to lie as before, but he was unable to do so. He could not remain in one spot, — he felt like getting up, undertaking something, in order to drown the rising terror, against which he felt himself to be powerless. He again drew out his cigarettes and matches, but there were but three matches left, and they were all bad. All three sizzled, without catching fire.

"The devil take you, accursed one, — go to!" he cursed, himself not knowing whom, and flung away the crushed cigarette. He wanted to fling away the matchbox, too, but he arrested the motion of his hand, and stuck it into his pocket. He was assailed by such unrest that he could no longer stay in one spot. He climbed out of the sleigh and, standing with his back against the wind, began to gird himself tightly low down in the waist.

"What sense is there in lying and waiting for death? I'll get on the horse and — march!" it suddenly occurred to him. "When I am on the horse's back, he will not stop. As for him," he thought, in reference to Nikíta, "it does not make much difference if he dies. What kind of a life is his, anyway? He does not even care much for life, while I, thank God, have something to live on."

And untying the horse, he threw the reins over his neck and tried to jump on him, but the fur coats and the boots were so heavy that he fell down. Then he stood

up on the sleigh, and tried to mount from the sleigh. But the sleigh tottered under his weight, and he fell down again. Finally he moved the horse for the third time up to the sleigh, and, standing carefully on its edge, finally succeeded in getting on his belly across the horse. Lying thus awhile, he moved forward once, and twice, and finally threw his leg across the horse's back, and seated himself, pressing with the soles of his boots against the lower crupper strap. The motion of the tottering sleigh woke up Nikíta, and he got up, and Vasíli Andréich thought that he was saying something.

"To listen to you, fools! Why should I perish, for nothing?" shouted Vasíli Andréich, and, adjusting the flapping skirts of his fur coat under his knees, he turned the horse and drove him away from the sleigh, in the direction where, he supposed, was the forest and the guard-house.

VII.

FROM the time that Nikíta had seated himself, after being covered with the blanket, against the back of the sleigh, he had remained motionless in the same posture. Like all men who live with Nature and know want, he was patient and could patiently wait for hours, even days, without experiencing either restlessness or irritation. He heard his master call him, but made no reply, because he did not want to move or talk. Though he was still warm from the tea he had drunk and from having moved about a great deal, when climbing over the snow-drifts, he knew that this heat would not last long and that he would not be able to warm himself by moving, because he felt himself as tired as a horse, when it stops and is unable, in spite of all the whipping, to move on, and the master sees that it has to be fed, to be able to work again. One foot in the torn boot was cold, and he no longer felt the big toe on it. Besides, he was getting colder and colder over his whole body. The thought that he might, and in all probability would, die that night, occurred to him, but this thought did not seem particularly disagreeable or terrible to him. This thought was not particularly disagreeable, because his whole life had not been a continuous holiday, but, on the contrary, an unceasing service, from which he was beginning to be tired. Nor was this thought particularly terrible to him, because, besides those masters, like Vasíli Andréich, whom he had been serving here, he felt himself always, in this life, dependent on the chief Master, who had sent him into this life, and he knew that even dying he would remain in

the power of the same Master, and that this Master would not do him any harm. "It is a pity to give up what I am used to and accustomed to. Well, what is to be done? I shall have to get used to the new things."

"Sins?" he thought, and he recalled his drunkenness, the money wasted in drink, the insult to his wife, his cursing, non-attendance at church, non-observance of fasts, and all that for which the pope had rebuked him at the confession. "Of course, they are sins; but have I brought them down on myself? God has evidently made me such. Well, and the sins! Where can one go to?"

Thus he thought at first as to what might happen with him that night, and later he no longer returned to these thoughts, but abandoned himself to those recollections which naturally occurred to him. Now he recalled Márfa's arrival, and the drunkenness of the workmen, and his refusal to drink liquor; now again the present journey, and Tarás's hut, and the talk about dividing up; now again he thought of his boy, of Yellow-muzzle, who would now get warmed up under the blanket, and of his master, who made the sleigh creak, as he kept tossing about in it. "I suppose, dear man, you are not a bit glad you have gone out," he thought. "A man who leads such a life does not want to die. It is not like one of us fellows." And all these recollections began to become mixed in his head, and he fell asleep.

But when Vasíli Andréich, seating himself on his horse, shook the sleigh, and the back of it, against which Nikíta was leaning, rose, and a runner struck Nikíta in his back, he awoke and was involuntarily compelled to change his position. With difficulty straightening out his legs and shaking off the snow from them, he got up, and immediately a painful cold penetrated his body. When he saw what the matter was, he wanted Vasíli Andréich to leave him the matting, which the horse did not need

any longer, so that he might cover himself with it, and he so called out to Vasíli Andréich.

But Vasíli Andréich did not stop, and disappeared in the powdery snow.

When Nikíta was left alone, he mused for awhile what to do. He did not feel himself strong enough to go and look for a house. He could no longer sit down in the old place,—it was all covered with snow. He felt that in the sleigh, too, he would not get warm, because he had nothing to cover himself with, and his caftan and fur coat no longer kept him warm. He was as cold as though he had nothing but his shirt on. He felt ill at ease. "Father, heavenly Father!" he muttered, and the consciousness that he was not alone, but that some one heard him and would not leave him, quieted him. He drew a deep breath and, without taking the blanket off his head, climbed into the sleigh and lay down where his master had been lying before.

But he could not warm himself in the sleigh, either. At first he trembled with his whole body, then the chill passed, and he began slowly to lose consciousness. He did not know whether he was dying or falling asleep, but he felt himself equally prepared for either.

VIII.

In the meantime Vasíli Andréich drove the horse with his feet and with the reins in the direction where, for some reason, he assumed that the forest and the guard-house were. The snow blinded him, and the wind, it seemed, wanted to stop him, but he, bending forward and constantly wrapping himself in his fur coat and sticking it between himself and the cold saddle-bolster, which made it hard for him to sit up, continued to drive the horse. Though with difficulty, the horse went submissively at a pace whither he was directed to go.

For about five minutes he rode, as he thought, straight ahead, without seeing anything but the head of the horse and the white wilderness, and without hearing anything but the whistle of the wind about the ears of the horse and the collar of his fur coat.

Suddenly something black stood out in front of him. His heart fluttered with joy, and he rode toward the black spot, thinking that he could make out the walls of village houses. But the blackness was not motionless; it kept moving, and was not a village, but tall mugwort, which had grown out on a balk and was sticking out through the snow and desperately tossing about under the pressure of the wind, which carried it to one side and whistled through it. For some reason the sight of this mugwort, agitated by the merciless wind, made Vasíli Andréich tremble, and he began hurriedly to drive the horse, without noticing that, in riding up to the mugwort, he had changed the direction wholly and now was driving

the horse in an entirely different direction, still thinking that he was riding to the place where the guard-house ought to be. But the horse kept turning to the right, and so he kept turning it to the left.

Again something black appeared in front. He rejoiced, being sure that this time it certainly was a village. But it was again a balk, which was overgrown with mugwort. The dry mugwort was fluttering in the wind as before, for some reason filling Vasíli Andréich with terror. But this was not only the same kind of mugwort: near by there was a horse track, which was just being drifted over. Vasíli Andréich stopped, bent over, looked close: it was a horse track that was just being covered up, and it could be nobody else's but his own. He was evidently going around in a circle, and within a small area. "I shall perish in this way!" he thought, but, not to submit to his terror, he began to drive his horse with more force, staring at the white snow mist, in which he thought he could discern points of light, which disappeared as soon as he looked close at them. At one time he thought he heard the barking of dogs or the howling of wolves, but these sounds were so feeble and so indefinite that he did not know whether he heard anything or whether it only seemed so to him, and he stopped and began to listen intently.

Suddenly a terrible, deafening noise was heard near his ears, and everything trembled and shook under him. Vasíli Andréich seized the horse's neck, but the horse's neck was also shaking, and the terrible sound became more terrible still. For a few seconds Vasíli Andréich could not regain his senses or make out what had happened. What had happened was, that Yellow-muzzle, either encouraging himself, or calling for somebody's aid, had neighed in his loud, melodious voice. "Pshaw, accursed one, how you have frightened me!" Vasíli Andréich said to himself. But even when he compre-

hended the true cause of his fright, he was not able to dispel it.

"I must come to my senses and regain my composure," he said to himself, and yet he could not control himself, and kept driving his horse, without noticing that he was no longer travelling with the wind, but against it. His body, especially where it was uncovered and touched the saddle-bolster, was freezing and aching, his hands and feet trembled, and his breath came in gusts. He saw that he was perishing amidst this terrible snow wilderness, and he did not see any means of salvation.

Suddenly the horse lurched forward and, sticking fast in a snow-drift, began to struggle and fall sidewise. Vasíli Andréich jumped down from his horse, and in his leap pulled the crupper on which his foot was resting to one side, and jerked down the saddle-bolster, to which he was holding as he jumped down. The moment Vasíli Andréich jumped down, the horse straightened himself up, rushed forward, took a second leap, and, neighing and dragging along the loosened matting and harness, disappeared from view, leaving Vasíli Andréich by himself in the snow-drift. Vasíli Andréich started after him, but the snow was so deep, and the fur coats were so heavy on him, that, sinking with every leg above his knee into the snow, he, after taking not more than twenty steps, got out of breath and stopped. "The grove, the steers, the estate, the shop, the taverns, the tin-roofed house and granary, the heir," he thought, "how will all this be left? What is this? Impossible!" it flashed through his head. And for some reason he recalled the mugwort fluttering in the wind, past which he had ridden twice, and he was assailed by such terror that he did not believe the reality of what happened with him. He thought: "Is not all this in a dream?" and he wanted to wake up, but there was no need of waking. It was real snow, which lashed his face and covered him up and chilled his right hand,

from which he had lost the glove, and this was a real wilderness, in which he was now left alone, like that mugwort, awaiting inevitable, imminent, senseless death.

"Queen of heaven, saintly Father Nicholas, teacher of abstinence," he recalled the mass of the previous day and the image with the black face in the gold-leaf, and the tapers which he had sold for this image and which were immediately brought back to him, and which he put away in the box almost untouched. And he began to beg this same Nicholas, the miracle-worker, to save him, promising him masses and tapers. But he at once understood clearly and indubitably that this image, gold-leaf, tapers, priest, masses, — all these were very important and necessary there, in the church, but that here they could do nothing for him, that between these tapers and masses and his present distressed condition there was, and could be, no connection. "I must not lose my courage," he thought. "I must follow the horse's tracks, or they will soon be covered with snow," it suddenly occurred to him. "This will take me out, and I may catch him yet. Only I must not be in haste, or I shall stick fast and be lost worse than ever." But, in spite of his intention to go slowly, he rushed forward and started on a run, falling all the time, getting up again, and falling again. The horse track became barely visible in those places where the snow was not deep. "I am lost," thought Vasíli Andréich, "I shall lose the track, and I shall not catch the horse." But just at that moment he looked forward and saw something black. This was Yellow-muzzle, and not only Yellow-muzzle himself, but also the sleigh and the shafts with the kerchief. Yellow-muzzle, with the harness and matting knocked sidewise, now stood, not in the old place, but near the shafts, and was tossing his head, which was pulled down by the rein he was stepping upon. It turned out that Vasíli Andréich had stuck fast

in the same ravine in which he had stuck fast with Nikíta, that the horse was taking him back to the sleigh, and that he had jumped off from him not more than fifty paces from where the sleigh was.

IX.

Making his way with difficulty to the sleigh, Vasíli Andréich grasped it, and for a long time stood motionless, trying to calm himself and get his breath. Nikíta was not in his old place, but in the sleigh lay something which was covered with snow, and Vasíli Andréich guessed that this was Nikíta. Vasíli Andréich's terror was now completely gone, and if he was afraid of anything, it was of that terrible condition of terror, which he had experienced on the horse, and especially when he was left alone in the drift. It was necessary by no means to permit this terror, and in order not to permit it, it was necessary for him to do something, to busy himself with something. And so the first thing he did was to stand with his back against the wind and to open up his fur coat. Then, as soon as he got his wind back a little, he shook the snow out of his boots and the left glove, — the right glove was hopelessly lost and no doubt somewhere deep in the snow; then he again girded himself tightly low in the waist, as he was in the habit of girding himself when he went out of the shop to buy the grain which the peasants brought in their carts, and began to prepare himself for work. The first thing he thought he had to do was to get the horse's foot out of the rein. So he did, and, having freed the rein, he again tied Yellow-muzzle to the iron clamp in the front of the sleigh, where he had stood before, and began to get behind the horse, in order to straighten on him the crupper, the saddle-bolster, and the matting; but at that moment he noticed that something moved in the sleigh, and from under the snow, with which the mass

was covered, rose Nikíta's head. It was evidently with great effort that Nikíta, who was freezing stiff, raised himself and sat up, in a strange manner, as though driving off the flies, swinging his hands in front of his face. He moved his hand and said something, — Vasíli Andréich thought he was calling him. Vasíli Andréich left the matting, without straightening it out, and walked over to the sleigh.

"What do you want?" he asked. "What did you say?"

"I am dy-dy-dying, that's what," Nikíta said, with difficulty, in a halting voice. "Give my earnings to my lad or to my woman, — it is all the same."

"Are you frozen?" asked Vasíli Andréich.

"I feel my death, — forgive, for Christ's sake," — Nikíta said, in a tearful voice, continuing to move his hands in front of his face, precisely as though he were warding off flies.

Vasíli Andréich for about half a minute stood silent and motionless, then suddenly, with the same determination with which he struck his hands at a profitable bargain, took a step backward, rolled up the sleeves of his fur coat, and began with both his hands to scrape the snow down from Nikíta and out of the sleigh. When he had finished the work, he hurriedly loosened his belt, spread the fur coat, and giving Nikíta a push, lay down on him, covering him not only with his fur coat, but also with his whole warm, heated-up body. Having with his hands fixed the skirts of the fur coat between the bast of the sleigh and Nikíta, and having caught the lower edge between his knees, Vasíli Andréich lay thus, face downward, pressing his head against the bast of the front of the sleigh, and now no longer heard the movement of the horse, nor the whistling of the storm, but only listened to Nikíta's breathing. Nikíta at first lay for a long time motionless, then heaved a loud sigh, and began to move.

"That's it, — you said you were dying. Lie still, warm yourself, — we shall — " began Vasíli Andréich.

But, to his great surprise, he was not able to speak more, because tears had appeared in his eyes, and his lower jaw was moving rapidly. He stopped talking, and only swallowed what came to his throat. "I am frightened, it seems; I am very weak," he thought to himself. But this weakness was not only not disagreeable to him, it even afforded him a certain special joy, such as he had never experienced before.

"We shall — " he said to himself, experiencing a certain solemn meekness of spirit. He lay for quite awhile in silence, wiping his eyes against the fur of his fur coat, and catching between his knees the right skirt of the fur coat, which was being carried away by the wind.

But he felt so much like telling somebody about his joyous condition.

"Nikíta!" he said.

"All right, I am warm," the answer came from below.

"Yes, my friend, I was lost. You would have frozen to death, and so should I."

But just then his jaws began to tremble, and his eyes were again filled with tears, and he was unable to continue speaking.

"That's nothing," he thought. "I know about myself what I know."

And he grew silent. Thus he lay for a long time.

He felt warm underneath, from Nikíta, and warm above, from the fur coat; only his hands, with which he held down the skirts of the fur coat on each side of Nikíta, and his legs, from which the wind kept blowing his fur coat away all the time, began to freeze. Particularly his right hand, without the glove, began to freeze. But he was not thinking of his feet or of his hands, but only of how he might warm up the peasant who was lying under him.

He looked several times at the horse, and saw that his back was uncovered and the matting and the harness were lying in the snow, and that it was necessary to get up and cover the horse, but he could not make up his mind to leave Nikíta for a minute and impair that joyous condition in which he was. He did not now experience any fear.

"Never mind, he can't get away," he said to himself about his warming up the peasant, with the same boasting with which he spoke of his purchases and sales.

Thus Vasíli Andréich lay an hour, and two and three hours, but he did not know how the time passed. At first there hovered in his imagination impressions of the snow-storm, a shaft, and horses under an arch, which were shaking before his eyes, and he thought of Nikíta, who was lying under him; then there were mingled in recollections of the holiday, his wife, the rural judge, the taper-box, and again Nikíta, who was lying under this box; then he saw peasants, who were buying and selling, and white walls, and houses roofed with tin, under which Nikíta was lying; then all this got mixed, — one thing entered into another, and, like the colours of the rainbow, which unite into one white colour, all the various impressions blended into one nothing, and he fell asleep. He slept for a long time, without dreams, but before daybreak the visions returned. He imagined he stood near the taper-box, and Tíkhon's wife was asking him for a five-kopek taper for the holiday, and he wanted to take the taper and give it to her, but his hands did not go up, but stuck fast in his pockets. He wanted to go around the box, but his legs did not move, and the new, clean galoshes stuck fast to the stone floor, and he could not lift them up or take his feet out of them. And suddenly the taper-box was not a box, but a bed, and Vasíli Andréich saw himself lying with his belly on the box, that is, in his bed, in his house. And he is lying on his bed and can-

not get up, but he must get up, because Iván Matvyéich, the rural judge, will soon come in, and he must go with Iván Matvyéich to buy the forest, or fix the crupper on Yellow-muzzle. And he asks his wife, "Well, Nikoláevna, has he been here?" "No," she says, "he has not." And he hears some one driving up to the porch. It must be he. No, past. "Nikoláevna, oh, Nikoláevna, is he not yet here?" "No." And he lies on his bed, and cannot get up, and waits, and this waiting gives him pain and joy. And suddenly the joy is accomplished: the one he has been waiting for has come, but it is not Iván Matvyéich, the rural judge, but some one else; but still it is the one he is waiting for. He has come, and he calls him, and the one who calls him is the one who has called him and who has told him to lie down on Nikíta. And Vasíli Andréich is glad that this somebody has come for him. "I am coming!" he cries joyfully, and this cry awakens him. And he wakes up, but he wakes up a different man from what he was when he fell asleep. He wants to get up, and he cannot; he wants to move his hand,—he cannot; his foot,—and again he cannot. He wants to turn his head, and he cannot do that either. And he wonders, but is not in the least worried about it. He understands that it is death, and is not in the least worried about it. And he recalls that Nikíta is lying under him, that Nikíta is warmed up and alive, and it seems to him that he is Nikíta, and Nikíta he, and that his life is not in him, but in Nikíta. He strains his hearing, and he hears Nikíta's breathing and even a feeble snoring. "Nikíta is alive, consequently I am alive," he says to himself, triumphantly.

And he thinks of the money, the shop, the house, the purchases, the sales, Mirónov's millions: he finds it hard to understand why this man, whom they used to call Vasíli Brekhunóv, busied himself with all these things that he did busy himself with. "Well, he did not know

what the matter was," he thinks of Vasíli Brekhunóv. "I did not know, but now I know. Now there is no mistake. Now I know." And again he hears the call of him who has called him before. "I am coming, I am coming!" his whole being says joyfully, meekly. And he feels that he is free and that nothing now holds him back.

And Vasíli Andréich saw and heard and felt nothing more in this world.

All about him there was the same snow mist as before. The same gusts of snow whirled about and covered the fur coat of dead Vasíli Andréich, and all of trembling Yellow-muzzle, and the barely visible sleigh, and warmed up Nikíta, who was lying deep down in it, under his dead master.

X.

Nikíta awoke before morning. What wakened him was the cold which was beginning to go down his spine. He dreamt that he was coming from the mill with a wagon-load of his master's flour, and that, in passing a brook, he had missed the bridge and stuck fast in the mud. And he sees that he crawled under the wagon and is lifting it with his arched back. But, strange to say, the wagon does not move and is glued to his back, and he cannot raise the wagon, nor get away from under it. It is crushing his whole spine. And it is so cold! He certainly must get out from under it. "This will do," he says to him who is pressing the wagon down on him. "Take off the bags!" But the wagon presses him colder and colder, and suddenly something knocks with peculiar force, and he awakens completely and recalls everything. The cold wagon is the frozen dead master, who is lying on him. And the knock was produced by Yellow-muzzle, who twice struck his hoof against the sleigh.

"Andréich, oh, Andréich!" Nikíta calls his master, cautiously, with a presentiment of the truth, and arching his back.

But Andréich makes no reply, and his belly and his legs are stiff and cold and heavy, like weights.

"Dead, no doubt. The kingdom of heaven be his!" thinks Nikíta.

He turns his head, digs with his hand through the snow, and opens his eyes. It is light; the wind whistles as before through the shafts, and the snow falls as before, with this difference only, that it no longer lashes the bast

of the sleigh, but noiselessly buries the sleigh and the horse, deeper and deeper, and neither the horse's motion nor his breathing can be heard. "He, too, must be frozen dead," Nikíta thought of Yellow-muzzle. And, indeed, those knocks with the hoofs against the sleigh, which awakened Nikíta, were the death-efforts of stiffly frozen Yellow-muzzle to keep on his feet.

"Lord, Father, apparently Thou art calling me too," Nikíta said to himself. "Thy holy will be done. I feel bad. Well, there is but one death, and that cannot be escaped. If it would only come soon — " And he again hid his hand, closing his eyes, and forgot himself, fully convinced that now he was certainly dying, the whole of him.

Not until noon of the following day did peasants dig Vasíli Andréich and Nikíta out with shovels, within thirty sázhens from the road, and half a verst from the village.

The snow was blown higher than the sleigh, but the shafts and the handkerchief could still be seen on it. Yellow-muzzle, up to his belly in the snow, with the crupper and matting pulled down from his back, stood all white, pressing his dead head against his stiff throat; his nostrils were frozen into icicles; the eyes were covered with hoarfrost, as though filled with tears. He had grown so thin in this one night that nothing but his hide and bones were left on him. Vasíli Andréich was cold, like a frozen carcass, and his legs were sprawling, and he remained bent, when he was rolled off Nikíta. His bulging hawk eyes were frozen, and his open mouth, beneath his clipped moustache, was filled with snow. But Nikíta was alive, though badly frozen. When Nikíta was awakened, he was sure that he was dead, and that what was taking place with him was happening in the other world, and not in this. But when he heard the shouting peasants, who were digging him out and rolling stiffened Vasíli Andréich off from him, he was at first surprised to

find out that people shouted in the same way in the other world and had the same kind of a body; but when he comprehended that he was still in this world, he was rather sorry than glad, especially when he felt that his toes on both his feet were frozen off.

Nikíta lay in the hospital for two months. They cut off three of his toes, and the others healed up, so that he could work again, and he continued to work another twenty years, at first as a labourer, and later, in his old age, as a watchman. He died only this last year, at home, as he had desired, under the holy images, and with a burning taper in his hands. Before his death he asked his old wife's forgiveness and forgave her for the cooper; he bade good-bye also to his boy and his grandchildren, and died, sincerely happy because by his death he was freeing his son and daughter-in-law from the burden of additional bread, and because he was now in reality passing from this life, of which he had become tired, into that other life, which with every year and hour became more comprehensible and more attractive to him.

We shall soon find out whether he is better off, or worse, there where he awoke after his real death, whether he was disappointed, or whether he found what he had expected.

EPILOGUE TO "DRÓZHZHIN'S LIFE AND DEATH"

1895

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EVEN Moses in his commandments, which were given to men five thousand years ago, proclaimed the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." The same was preached by all the prophets; the same was preached by the sages and teachers of the whole world; the same was preached by Christ, who forbade men to commit not only murder, but everything which may lead to it, all irritation and anger against a brother; and the same is written in the heart of every man so clearly that there is no act which is more loathsome to the whole being of an uncorrupted man than the murder of one's like, — man.

And yet, despite the fact that this law of God was clearly revealed to us by Moses, by the prophets, and by Christ, and that it is so indelibly written in our hearts that there cannot be the slightest doubt of its obligatoriness for us, this law is not recognized in our world, but the very opposite law is recognized, that of the obligatoriness for every man of our time to enter military service, that is, to join the ranks of murderers, to swear to be ready to commit murder, to learn the art of killing, and actually to kill his like, when that is demanded of him.[1]

In pagan times, the Christians were commanded in

[1] In countries where there is no compulsory military service, the law of God and of conscience about not killing is also violated by all their citizens, though not so obviously, because the hiring, enlisting,

words to renounce Christ and God, and in sign of the renunciation to bring sacrifices to the pagan gods.

But now, in our time, the Christians are commanded not only to renounce Christ and God by bringing sacrifices to pagan gods (a person may sacrifice to pagan gods, while remaining a Christian at heart), but also by committing an act which is unquestionably most contrary to Christ and to God and which is forbidden by Christ and by God, — to swear to be ready to commit murder, to prepare himself for murder, and frequently to commit murder itself.

And as formerly there were found men who refused to worship pagan gods, and for their loyalty to Christ and God sacrificed their lives, so there have been men who have not renounced Christ and God, who have not consented to take an oath that they would be ready to commit murder, who did not join the ranks of murderers, and who for this loyalty have perished in the most terrible sufferings, as was the case with Drózhzhin, whose life is described in this book.

And as in former times those who were considered half-witted and strange, the martyrs of Christianity, who perished because they did not wish to renounce Christ, by their loyalty to Christ alone destroyed the pagan world and opened a path for Christianity, so now people, like Drózhzhin, who are considered to be madmen and fanatics, who prefer sufferings and death to transgressing God's law, by their very loyalty to the law destroy the existing cruel order more surely than do the revolutions, and reveal to men the new joyful condition of universal brotherhood, of the kingdom of God, which was proclaimed by the prophets, and the foundations of which were laid eighteen hundred years ago by Christ.

and maintaining of armies, with the money consciously paid by all the citizens for the business of murder, which they all consider to be indispensable, is just as much a consent to killing and a coöperation with it as the personal participation in military service. — *Author's Note.*

But such men as Drózhzhin, who now refuse to renounce God and Christ, by their activity not only contribute to the establishment of that kingdom of God which the prophets predicted, but by their example indicate the one unquestionable road by which this kingdom of God may be attained and all that may be destroyed which interferes with its establishment.

The difference between the ancient martyrs of Christianity and those of the present time consists only in this, that then it was the pagans who demanded pagan acts from the Christians, while now it is not pagans, but Christians, or at least those who call themselves so, that are demanding from the Christians pagan, the most terrible pagan acts, such as the pagans did not ask for, — murder; that then paganism found its strength in ignorance, because it did not know, did not understand Christianity, while now the cruelty of the so-called Christianity is based on deception, on conscious deception. To free Christianity from violence it was then necessary to convince the pagans of the truth of Christianity, but that was for the most part impossible to do. Julian the Apostate and many of the best men of the time were sincerely convinced that paganism was enlightenment and a good, and Christianity — darkness, ignorance, and evil. But to free Christianity now from violence and cruelty, it is necessary to arraign the deception of the false Christianity. This deception unanswerably arraigns itself through the one simple, imperturbable profession of the truth, which inevitably provokes the so-called Christian powers to the exercise of violence, to tortures, and to the killing of Christians for observing precisely what they themselves profess.

Formerly a Christian, in refusing to worship the pagan gods, said to the pagans, "I reject your faith; I am a Christian, and I cannot and will not serve your gods, but will serve the one true God and His son Jesus Christ,"

and the pagan powers punished, because he professed a religion which they considered to be false and harmful, and his punishment had no contradiction in itself and did not undermine the paganism, in the name of which he was punished. But now a Christian who refuses to commit murder no longer makes his confession to pagans, but to men who call themselves Christians. And if he says, "I am a Christian, and I cannot and will not fulfil any demands for committing murder, which are contrary to the Christian law," he can no longer be told, as he was formerly told by the pagans, "You are professing a false and harmful teaching," but he is told, "We are also Christians, but you do not correctly understand Christianity, when you assert that a Christian may not kill. A Christian can and must kill, when he is commanded to do so by him who at a given moment is considered to be his chief. And because you do not agree with this, that a Christian must not love his enemies, and must kill all those whom he is commanded to kill, we, the Christians, who profess the law of humility, love, and forgiveness, punish you."

It turns out that the powers which recognize themselves as being Christian, at every such a conflict with men who refuse to commit murder, are compelled in the most obvious and solemn manner to renounce that Christianity and moral law on which alone their power is based.

Besides, unfortunately for the false powers, and fortunately for all humanity, the conditions of military service have of late become quite different from what they were before, and so the demands of the authorities have become even more obviously non-Christian, and the refusals to fulfil their demands have arraigned Christianity even more.

Formerly hardly one-hundredth part of all men was called to do military service, and the government was in

a position to assume that men of a lower stage of morality took to military service, men for whom military service did not present anything contrary to their Christian conscience, as was partly the case when men were put in the army for a punishment. When at that time a man, who by his moral qualities could not be a murderer, was called to do military service, such a case was unfortunate and exceptional.

But now, when everybody has to do military service, the best men, those who are most Christian in their thoughts and who are far removed from the possibility of taking part in murder, must all recognize themselves as being murderers and apostates from God.

Formerly the hired army of the ruler was formed by especially chosen, very coarse, non-Christian, and ignorant men, or volunteers and mercenaries; formerly no one or but few men read the Gospel, and men did not know its spirit, but only believed in what the priest told them; and formerly only the rarest people, who were peculiarly fanatical in spirit, the sectarians, considered military service to be a sin and refused to take part in it. But now there is not a man in any Christian state who is not obliged consciously, by means of his money, and in most countries of Europe directly, to take part in the preparations for murder, or in the murders themselves; now nearly all men know the Gospel and the spirit of Christ's teaching; all know that the priests are bribed deceivers, and none but the most ignorant men believe in them; and now it is not merely the sectarians, but also men who do not profess any special dogmas, cultured men, freethinkers, who refuse to do military service, and they do not refuse merely for their own sake, but openly and outspokenly say to all men that murder is not compatible with any profession of Christianity.

And so one such refusal to do military service as Drózhzhin's, which is sustained in spite of tortures and

death, one such refusal shakes the whole enormous structure of violence, which is built on the lie, and threatens its destruction.

The governments have a terrible power in their hands, and it is not merely a material power, — a vast amount of money, institutions, wealth, submissive officials, the clergy, and the army, — but also vast spiritual powers of influencing men that are in the hands of the government. It can, if not bribe, at least crush and destroy all those who are opposed to it. A bribed clergy preaches militarism in the churches; bribed authors write books which justify militarism; in the schools, both the higher and the lower, they have introduced the obligatory instruction of deceptive catechisms, in which children are impressed with the idea that it is not only allowable, but even obligatory, to kill in war and after a trial; all those who enter the army are compelled to take an oath; everything which could reveal the deception is strictly prohibited and punished, — the most terrible punishments are imposed upon men who do not fulfil the demands of serving in the army, that is, of killing.

And, strange to say, all that enormous, mighty mass of men, which is vested with all the force of human power, trembles, hides itself, feeling its guilt, and shakes in its existence, and is ready any moment to go to pieces and turn to dust at the appearance of one man, like Drózhzhin, who does not yield to human demands, but obeys the demands of God and professes them openly.

In our time such men as Drózhzhin do not stand alone; there are thousands, tens of thousands of them, and their number and, above all else, their importance are growing with every year and every hour. In Russia we know tens of thousands of men who have refused to swear allegiance to the new Tsar, and who recognize military service to be murder, which is incompatible not only with Christianity, but even with the lowest demands of

honour, justice, and morality. We know such men in all European countries: we know of the Nazarenes, who appeared less than fifty years ago in Austria and Servia and who from a few hundreds have grown to be more than thirty thousand strong, and who, in spite of all kinds of persecution, have refused to take part in military service. We have learned lately of a highly cultured surgeon of the army, who refused to do military service, because he considered it contrary to his conscience to serve such an institution as is the army, which is intended only for doing violence to men and killing them.

But even this is not important, that there are many of them and that they are growing more and more, but that the one true path has been found along which humanity will undoubtedly arrive at its liberation from evil, which has fettered it, and because on that path nothing and nobody can now stop it, because for liberation on this path no efforts are wanted for the destruction of evil: — it disperses of its own accord and melts like wax in the fire, — all that is needed is a *non-participation* in it. In order to stop taking part in this evil, from which we suffer, no special mental, nor bodily efforts are needed, — all that is needed is to abandon oneself to one's nature, to be good and true before God and oneself.

"You want me to become a murderer, but I cannot do so, and neither God nor my conscience permit me to do so. And so do with me what you please; but I will neither kill nor prepare myself for murder, nor be an accomplice in it." And this simple answer, which every man must inevitably make, because it arises from the consciousness of the men of our time, destroys all that evil of violence which has weighed heavily on the world for so long a time.

They say that in Holy Scripture it says:

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power

resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. xiii. 1–7). Consequently it is necessary to submit to the powers.

But to say nothing of this, that the same politic Paul, who told the Romans that it is necessary to obey the authorities, told the Ephesians something quite different.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. vi. 10–12). Paul's words to the Romans about obeying the powers that be can in no way be harmonized with Christ's own teaching, the whole meaning of which consists in the liberation of men from the power of the world and their submission to the power of God.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you (John xv. 18). They have persecuted me, they will also persecute you (John xv. 20). If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world,

therefore the world hateth you (John xv. 19). And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles (Matt. x. 18, Mark xiii. 9). And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake (Matt. x. 22). They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake (Luke xxi. 12). Whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them (John xvi. 2–4). Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known (Matt. x. 26). And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body (Matt. x. 28). The prince of this world is judged (John xvi. 11). Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John xvi. 33)."

Christ's whole teaching is an indication of the path of liberation from the power of the world, and Christ, when He was himself persecuted, reminded His disciples that, if they would be true to His teaching, the world would persecute them, and advised them to have courage and not be afraid of their persecutors. He not only taught them this in words, but with His whole life and relation to the powers gave them an example of how those must act who wished to follow Him. Christ not only did not obey the powers, but kept all the time arraigning them: He arraigned the Pharisees for violating God's law with their human traditions; He arraigned them for falsely observing the Sabbath, for falsely sacrificing in the temple; He arraigned them for their hypocrisy and cruelty; He arraigned the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum; He arraigned Jerusalem and predicted its ruin.

In reply to the question as to whether He shall give the established tax upon entering Capernaum, He says distinctly that the sons, that is, His disciples, are free from every tax and are not obliged to pay it, and only not to tempt the collectors of the taxes, not to provoke them to commit the sin of violence, He orders His disciples to give that stater, which is accidentally found in the fish, and which does not belong to any one and is not taken from any one.

But in reply to the cunning question as to whether the tribute is to be paid to Cæsar, He says, "To Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and to God the things which are God's," that is, give to Cæsar what belongs to him and is made by him, — the coin, — and to God give what is made by God and is implanted in you, — your soul, your conscience; give this to no one but God, and so do not do for Cæsar what is forbidden by God. And this answer surprises all by its boldness — and at the same time by its unanswerableness.[1]

When Christ is brought before Pilate, as a mutineer who has been perverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar (Luke xxiii. 2), He, after saying what He found necessary to say, surprises and provokes all the chiefs with this, that He pays no attention to all their questions, and makes no reply to any of their questions.

For this arraignment of the power and disobedience to it, Christ is sentenced and crucified.

[1] Not only the complete misunderstanding of Christ's teaching, but also a complete unwillingness to understand it could have admitted that striking misinterpretation, according to which the words, "To Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," signify the necessity of obeying Cæsar. In the first place, there is no mention there of obedience; in the second place, if Christ recognized the obligatoriness of paying tribute, and so of obedience, He would have said directly, "Yes, it should be paid;" but He says, "Give to Cæsar what is his, that is, the money, and give your life to God," and with these latter words He not only does not encourage any obedience to power, but, on the contrary, points out that in everything which belongs to God it is not right to obey Cæsar. — *Author's Note.*

The whole story of Christ's sufferings and death is nothing but the story of those calamities to which inevitably every man will be subjected, if he follows Christ's example of obedience to God and not to the powers of the world. Suddenly we are assured that the whole of Christ's teaching must not only be corrected, but even be abolished in consequence of the thoughtless and cunning words which Paul wrote to the Romans.

But Paul's words contradict Christ's teaching and life, with all the desire to obey the powers, as Paul commands us to do, not only from fear, but also from conviction, and in our time such an obedience has become absolutely impossible.

To say nothing of the inner contradiction between Christianity and the obedience to the powers, such obedience to the powers, not from fear, but from conviction, has become impossible in our day, because, in consequence of the universal diffusion of enlightenment, the power, as something worthy of respect, something exalted, and, above all, something definite and whole, has been completely destroyed in our time, and there is no possibility of reëstablishing it.

It was all very well not only from fear, but also from conviction, to obey the power, when the men under the power saw what the Romans saw in it, — the emperor-god, or what the Chinese see in their emperor, — the sun of heaven; or when men in the Middle Ages, and even down to the Revolution, saw in the kings and emperors divinely anointed men, just as until lately in Russia the masses saw in the Tsar an earthly God, when tsars, kings, and emperors were not represented otherwise than in majestic situations, doing wise and great things. But it is quite different to-day, when, in spite of all the efforts of the powers and their friends and even the subjects themselves to reëstablish the awe for the power, enlightenment, history, experience, the intercourse of men among

themselves have destroyed this awe, so that it is as impossible to reëstablish it as it is in the spring to reëstablish the melted snow, and as impossible to construct anything firm upon it as it is to travel in a sleigh over a widely spreading river, from which the ice has disappeared.

It cannot be otherwise, since now all men, with the exception of the coarsest and most uncultured of men, whose number is growing less and less, know what immoral persons were Louis XI., Elizabeth of England, John IV., Catherine, Napoleon, Nicholas I., who ruled and decided the fates of millions, and who did not rule thanks to some sacred, invariable law, as people used to think formerly, but only because these people were able by means of all kinds of deceptions, by cunning, and by rascalities so to strengthen their power that it was impossible to dethrone, kill, or drive them away, as was done in the case of Charles I., Louis XVI., Maximilian of Mexico, Louis Philippe, and others.

It cannot be otherwise, since all men know that even the kings and emperors who rule at the present time are not only not some especial, holy, great, wise people, who are interested in the good of their nations, but, on the contrary, for the most part very badly educated, ignorant, vainglorious, immoral, frequently very stupid and bad men, who are always corrupted by luxury and flattery, who are not at all interested in the good of their subjects, but in their own personal affairs, and are, above all else, without cessation concerned in maintaining their tottering power, which is upheld only by means of cunning and deception.

Not only do men now see the material of which are made their rulers, who formerly presented themselves to them as especial beings, and not only have men peeped behind the curtain, so that it is impossible to reconstruct the old illusion, they also see and know, besides, that it

is not really these rulers that rule, but, in constitutional states, the members of the Chambers, the ministers, who attain their positions by means of intrigues and bribes, and in unconstitutional countries, the wives, paramours, favourites, flatterers, and all kinds of parasitic accomplices.

How can a man respect the power and obey it, not from fear, but from conviction, when he knows that this power is not something which exists separately from him, but is the product of men's intrigues and cunning, and constantly passes from one person to another? Knowing this, a man can not only not obey the power from conviction, but cannot even help trying to destroy the existing power and himself to become it, that is, making his way into power, to seize as much of it as he can. And this is actually taking place.

The power of which Paul spoke, the power which one can obey from conviction, has outlived its day. It no longer exists. It has melted like the ice, and it will not support anything. What formerly was a solid surface of the river is now liquid, and in order to journey over it we do not need a sleigh and horses, but a boat and oars. Even so the composition of life has so completely changed, as the result of education, that the power, in the sense in which it used to be understood, has no longer any place in our world, and all there is left is rude violence and deception. But violence and deception cannot be obeyed, "not from fear, but from conviction."

"But how can we help obeying the powers? If we do not obey the powers, there will happen terrible calamities, and bad men will torment, oppress, and kill the good."

"How can we help but obey the power?" say I myself. "How can we make up our minds not to obey the power, the one unquestionable power, from which we shall never get away, under which we always are, and the demands of which we know incontestably and unerringly?"

They say: "How can we make up our minds not to obey the powers?"

What powers? In the time of Catherine, when Pugachév rebelled, half the people swore allegiance to Pugachév and were under his power. Well, what power had to be obeyed? Catherine's or Pugachév's? And again, who was to be obeyed in the time of the same Catherine, who usurped the power from her husband, the Tsar, to whom people had sworn allegiance? Was it Peter III. or Catherine?

Not one Russian Tsar, from Peter I. to Nicholas I. included, assumed the throne in such a way that it was clear what power was to be obeyed. Who was to be obeyed, Peter I. or Sophia, or John, Peter's elder brother? Sophia had just as much right to the throne, and the proof of it is this, that after her ruled women who had even less right to it, — the two Catherines, Anna, Elizabeth. Whose power was to be obeyed after Peter, when some courtiers raised to the throne a soldier woman, the paramour of Ménshikov, Sheremétev, and Peter, — Catherine I., — and then Peter II., and then Anna and Elizabeth, and finally Catherine II., who had no more right to the throne than had Pugachév, since during her reign the legitimate heir, John, was kept in prison and was killed by her order, and there was another, unquestionably a legitimate heir, Paul, who was of age? And whose power had to be obeyed, Paul's or Alexander's, at the time that the conspirators, who killed Paul, were just getting ready to kill him? And whose power had to be obeyed, Constantine's or Nicholas's, when Nicholas took the power away from Constantine? All history is the history of the struggle of one power against another, not only in Russia, but also in all the other countries.

More than this: must we, not in time of civil war and the dethronement of one set of rulers and the substitution of another set in their place, but in the most peaceful

times, obey Arakchéev, who seized the power, or must we try to overthrow him and convince the Tsar of the worthlessness of his ministers? Not the supreme power, but its servants control men: must we obey these servants, when their demands are obviously bad and detrimental?

Thus, no matter how much we may desire to obey the power, we cannot do so, because there is not one definite earthly power, but all the powers of the earth waver, change, fight among themselves. What power is the real one, and when is it real? And so, what power is to be obeyed?

But not only is the power which demands obedience doubtful, and we cannot know whether it is the real one or not,—it also demands of us not indifferent, harmless acts, such as this, that we should build a pyramid, a temple, a castle, or even should serve the mighty of this earth and should satisfy their lusts and their luxury. That would still be possible to do. But this doubtful power demands of us that we should commit the most terrible act for a man,— murder, the preparation for it, the acknowledgment of our readiness for it; it demands an act which is obviously prohibited by God, and which, therefore, causes our souls to perish. Is it possible that I must, out of obedience to this human, accidental, wavering, discordant power, forget the demands of that one divine power, which is so clearly and so indubitably known to me, and cause my soul to perish?

"We cannot help obeying the power."

"Yes, we cannot help obeying the power," say I myself, "only it is not the power of an emperor, king, president, parliament, and the chiefs chosen by them, whom I do not know and with whom I have nothing in common, but the power of God whom I know, with whom I live, from whom I received my soul, and to whom I shall return it to-morrow, if not to-day."

I am told, "There will be calamities, if we are not going to obey the power." And they tell the actual truth

if by power they mean the real power, and not the human deception which is called power. There are those calamities, and they are terrible, horrible calamities, through which we are passing now, for the very reason that we do not obey the one unquestionable power of God which was clearly revealed to us in Scripture and in our hearts.

We say: "Our calamities consist in this, that the rich and the idle are growing richer, and the poor, the labouring people are growing poorer; that the masses are deprived of the land, and so are compelled to do convict labour in the factories which manufacture articles that they do not use; that the masses are made drunk on whiskey, which the government sells to them; that young men go into the army, become corrupted, spread diseases, and are made unfit for a simple life of labour; that the rich sit in judgment in the courts, while the poor sit in prisons; that the masses are stultified in the schools and churches, and that officials and the clergy are rewarded for this by means of the money taken from the masses; that all the popular forces, men and money, are used for war and the army, and this army is in the hands of the rulers, who by means of this army crush everything which is not in harmony with their advantage."

These calamities are terrible. But whence do they come? On what are they based? Only on this, that men do not obey the one true power and its law, which is written in their hearts, but obey invented human statutes which they call the law. If men obeyed this one true power of God and His law, they would not take upon themselves the obligation to kill their like, would not enter the army and would not give money for the hire and support of an army. If there were no army, there would not be all those cruelties and all that injustice, which it supports. Only by means of an army is it possible to establish and maintain such an order that all the

land is in the hands of those who do not work it, and those who work are deprived of it; only by means of an army is it possible to take away the labours of the poor and give them to the rich; only by means of an army is it possible purposely to stupefy the masses and deprive them of the possibility of real enlightenment. All that is supported by means of an army. But the army consists of soldiers, and we are the soldiers. If there were no soldiers, there would not be anything of the kind.

The condition of men is now such that nothing can change it but obedience to the true, and not to the false, power.

"But this new condition without an army, without a government, will be many times worse than the one we are in now," we are told. "Worse for whom?" ask I. "For those who now rule, for one-hundreth part of the whole nation? For that part of the nation, of course, it will be worse, but not for all the mass of working people, who are deprived of the land and of the products of their labour, for the simple reason that for these ninety-nine-hundredths of the people the condition cannot be worse than it now is."

And by what right do we assume that the condition of men will become worse, if they obey the law of not committing murder, which is revealed to them by God and is implanted in their hearts? To say that everything in this world will get worse, if the men in it shall follow the law which God gave them for the life in this world, is the same as though we should say that it will be worse, if men are going to use a machine which is given to them, not according to their arbitrary will, but according to the instruction as regards the use of the machine, which is given them by him who invented and constructed the machine.

There was a time when humanity lived like wild beasts, and everybody took for himself in life everything which

he could, taking away from others what he wanted, and killing and annihilating his neighbours. Then there came a time, when men united into societies and states, and began to establish themselves as nations, defending themselves against other nations. Men became less similar to beasts, but still considered it not only possible, but even indispensable, and so proper to kill their domestic and foreign enemies. Now the time is at hand and is already here, when men, according to Christ's words, are entering into the new condition of the brotherhood of all men, into that new condition which was long ago predicted by the prophets, when all men shall be taught by God, shall forget how to fight, shall forge the swords into ploughshares and the spears into pruning-hooks, and there will come the kingdom of God, the kingdom of union and of peace. This condition was predicted by the prophets, but Christ's teaching showed how and through what it can be materialized, namely, through brotherly union, one of the first manifestations of which must be the abolition of violence. The necessity of the destruction of violence is already recognized by men, and so this condition will arrive as inevitably as formerly the political condition followed after the savage state.

Humanity is in our time in the child-labour of this nascent kingdom of God, and this labour will inevitably end in birth. But the arrival of this new life will not take place of its own accord, — it depends on us. We must do it all. The kingdom of God is within us.

In order to produce this kingdom of God within us, we do not need, I repeat, any special mental or physical conditions; we need only be what we are, what God made us, that is, rational and, above all, good beings, who follow the voice of our conscience.

"But that is where the trouble is: men are neither rational nor good beings," I already hear the voice of those men who, to have the right to be bad, assert that the

whole human race is bad, and that this is not merely an experimental, but also a divine, revealed, religious truth. "Men are all evil and irrational," they assert, "and so it is necessary for the rational and good men to maintain order."

But if all men are irrational and bad, whence shall we take the rational and the good? And if there are such, how are we going to tell them? And if we can tell them, by what means shall we (who are those "we" going to be?) put them at the head of other men? But if even we shall be able to put these especial, rational, and good men at the head of the others, will not these rational and good men stop being such, if they are going to exert violence and punish the irrational and the bad? And, above all else, you say that, in order to keep some thieves, pillagers, and murderers from violating and killing men, you are going to establish courts, a police, an army, which will constantly violate and kill men, and whose duty will consist in nothing else, and into these institutions you will draw all men. But in such a case you are putting in the place of a small and assumed evil another which is greater, a universal and a certain evil. In order to defend ourselves against some imaginary murderers, you compel all men certainly to become murderers. And so I repeat that for the realization of a brotherly intercourse among men we need no special efforts, no mental or bodily efforts, but need only be what God made us, — rational and good beings, — and act in conformity with these properties.

It is not for every one of us to bear all the trials which Drózhzhin endured (although, if this shall be our fate, — may God help us to bear it all, without being false to Him); but whether we want it or not, — even if we live in a country where there is no military duty or we are not called upon to perform such duty, — every one is called in one way or another to subject himself, though

in other, much easier forms, to the same trial and, whether he wills so or not, to stand on the side of the oppressors or himself to become an oppressor, or on the side of the oppressed and to help them to bear their trials, or himself to undergo them. Every one of us, even if we do not take any direct part in the persecutions against these new martyrs, as do the emperors, ministers, governors, judges, who sign the decrees for the torturing of these martyrs, or as still more directly do the tormentors themselves, such as the jailers, guards, executioners, — every one of us has none the less to take an active part in these affairs by means of those opinions which we pass upon them in print, in letters, and in conversations. Frequently we, out of laziness, do not reflect on the significance of such a phenomenon, only because we do not wish to impair our peace by a lively representation of what is being suffered by those men who on account of their truthfulness, sincerity, and love of men are pining away in prisons and in places of deportation, and we repeat, without thinking of what we are saying, opinions which we have heard or read elsewhere, "What is to be done? It serves them right. They are harmful fanatics and the government must suppress such attempts," and similar words, which support the persecutors and increase the sufferings of the persecuted. We will think ten times about an act of ours, about the disbursement of a certain sum, about the destruction or construction of a house, but it seems of so little consequence to say a few words that we generally speak without thinking. And yet, speech is the most significant of all the acts which we can do. Public opinion is composed from what is said. And public opinion more than all the kings and sovereigns rules all the affairs of men. And so every opinion of ours, concerning acts such as Drózhzhin's act, may be a work of God, which contributes to the realization of the kingdom of God, the brotherhood of men, and which helps those ad-

vanced men who give their lives for its realization, or may be a work which is hostile to God, which works against Him, and which contributes to the torments of those men who abandon themselves to His service.

Drózhzhin tells in his diary of one such cruel effect produced upon him by frivolous words that were hostile to God. He tells how in the first of his incarceration, when he, in spite of all his physical sufferings and all his humiliation, continued to experience joyous peace, in the consciousness that he had done what he ought to have done, he was affected by a letter from a friend of his, a revolutionist, who, *out of love for him*, tried to persuade him to have pity on himself, to recant, and to do the will of the authorities, — to take the oath and serve. Apparently this young man, who had the spirit of a revolutionist and according to the customary code of the revolutionists admitted as a principle that the end justifies the means and that all kinds of compromises with his conscience were allowable, absolutely failed to understand those religious sentiments which guided Drózhzhin, and so had written him frivolously, asking him not to throw away his life, which was a useful tool for the revolution, and to fulfil all the demands of the authorities. These words, it would seem, ought not to have had any special significance, and yet Drózhzhin writes that these words deprived him of his peace and that he fell ill in consequence of them.

This is quite comprehensible. All men who move humanity forward and who are the first and foremost to step out on the path on which all men will soon walk, do not come out on this path lightly, but always with suffering and with an internal struggle. An inner voice draws them on to the new path, and all their attachments, the traditions of weakness, draw them back. In such moments of unstable balance every word of support or, on the contrary, of retardation has an enormous importance.

The strongest man can be pulled over by a child, when this man is straining all his strength in order to move a burden which is above his strength.

Drózhzhin experienced terrible despair from these apparently unimportant words of his friend, and quieted down only when he received a letter from his friend Izyumchénko, who joyfully bore the same fate, and who expressed a firm conviction of the righteousness of his act.[1] And so, no matter how far we may personally stand from events of this character, we always involuntarily take part in them, influence them through our relation to them, through our judgments of them.

Let us take the standpoint of his friend the revolutionist, and consider that, to be able at some time, somewhere, to influence the external conditions of life, we can and must depart from the very first demands of our conscience, and we not only do not alleviate the sufferings and the struggle of men who strive to serve God, but we also prepare these sufferings of an inner discord for all those who will have to solve the dilemma in life. And there is not one who will not have to solve it. And so all of us, no matter how far we may be removed from such events, take part in them with our opinions and judgments. A thoughtless, careless word may become the source of the greatest sufferings for the best men in the world. We cannot be too careful in the use of this tool: "By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned."

But many of us are called to take part in such events not with words alone, but in a still more direct way. I am speaking of those who serve, who in one way or

[1] This friend was for the same refusal to do military service locked up in the guard-house in Kursk. Just now, while I am writing these lines, this friend is kept in strictest secrecy, having no permission to see any one, in the Moscow transportation prison, on his way to the Government of Tobólsk, whither he is deported by order of the Tsar. —*Author's Note.*

another take part in those hopeless oppressions, by means of which the government persecutes such men as Drózhzhin, and which only strengthen the movement; I am speaking of the participants in these persecutions, beginning with the emperor, the ministers, the judges, the prosecuting attorneys, and ending with the guards and jailers, who torture these martyrs. You all, participants in these torments, know that this man, whom you torture, is not only not a malefactor, but also an exceptionally good man, that he is being tormented for the very reason that he wants with all the forces of his heart to be good; you know that he is young, that he has friends, a mother, that he loves you and forgives you. And you will put him in a lockup, will take away his clothes, starve him, not give him to eat, not let him sleep, deprive him of his communion with his neighbours, his friends.

How can you, emperor, who have signed such a decree, minister, prosecutor, superintendent of the prison, jailer, sit down to your dinner, knowing that he is lying on a cold floor and in exhaustion is weeping on account of your malice? How can you fondle your child? How can you think of God, of death, which will lead you to Him? No matter how much you may pretend to be the executors of some invariable laws, you are simply men, and good men, and you are to be pitied, and you show pity, and only in this pity and love for one another does our life consist.

You say that necessity compels you to serve in your capacity. You know yourselves that that is not true. You know that there is no necessity, that necessity is a conventional word, that what for you is a necessity, is for another a luxury; you know that you can find another position, one in which you will have no need to torture people, and what people! Precisely in this way did they torture the prophets, and later Christ, and later His disciples; thus have they always tortured those who,

loving them, lead them ahead to their good. If you could only refrain from being participants in these tortures!

It is terrible to torture an innocent bird, an animal. How much more terrible it is to torture a good, pure youth, who loves men and wishes them well. It is terrible to be a participant in this matter.

And, above all, to be a participant for nothing, — to ruin his body, oneself, one's soul, and yet not only not to put a stop to the consummation of the establishment of the kingdom of God, but, on the contrary, against one's will to contribute to its triumph.

It has come and is already here.

Moscow, March 4, 1895.

RELIGION AND MORALITY

1894

RELIGION AND MORALITY

You asked me: (1) what I understand by the word "religion," and (2) whether I consider morality possible apart from religion, as I understand it.

I will try to the best of my ability to answer these extremely important and beautifully put questions.

Among the majority of the men of modern culture it is considered a settled question that the essence of every religion consists in the personification and deification of the forces of Nature, resulting from superstitious fear before the incomprehensible phenomena of Nature, and in the worship of these forces.

This opinion is accepted without criticism, upon faith, by the cultured crowd of our time, and not only does not meet with any opposition from the men of science, but for the most part finds among them the most definite confirmations. Though now and then voices, like those of Max Müller and of others, who ascribe to religion a different origin and meaning, are raised, they are not heard or noticed amidst the universal, unanimous recognition of religion as a manifestation of superstition in general. Even recently, in the beginning of the present century, the most advanced men, who rejected Catholicism and Protestantism, as did the Encyclopædists at the end of the last century, did not deny that religion in general was

a necessary condition of the life of every man. To say nothing of the Deists, such as Bernardin de St. Pierre, Diderot, and Rousseau, Voltaire erected a monument to God, and Robespierre established the holiday of the supreme being. But in our time, thanks to the frivolous and superficial teaching of Auguste Comte, who, like the majority of the French, sincerely believed that Christianity was nothing but Catholicism, and who, therefore, saw in Catholicism a full realization of Christianity, it has been decided and recognized by the cultured crowd, which is always prone to accept the basest representations, that religion is nothing but a certain outlived phase of the evolution of humanity. It is assumed that humanity has already passed through two periods, the religious and the metaphysical, and that it has now entered on the third, the highest, the scientific period, and that all the religious phenomena among men are only the functions of some unnecessary spiritual organ of humanity, which has long ago lost its meaning and significance, like the nail of a horse's fifth toe. It is assumed that the essence of religion consists in the recognition of imaginary beings, evoked by fear in the presence of the incomprehensible forces of Nature, and in the worship of them, an opinion which even in antiquity was held by Democritus, and is now reiterated by the most modern philosophers and historians of religion.

But, to say nothing of the fact that the recognition of invisible supernatural beings, or of one such being, has not always originated in the fear of the unknown forces of Nature, as is witnessed by hundreds of the most advanced and highly cultured men of the past, such as Socrates, Descartes, Newton, and by similar men of our time, who certainly do not recognize a higher supernatural being out of fear of the unknown forces of Nature, the assertion that religion originated in the superstitious fear of the incomprehensible forces of Nature in reality gives

no answer to the main question as to whence men have taken the conception of the invisible supernatural beings.

If men were afraid of thunder and lightning, they would still be afraid of thunder and lightning, but why did they invent a certain invisible, supernatural being, Jupiter, who is somewhere, and at times casts his arrows down upon men?

If men were startled by the sight of death, they would continue to be afraid of death, but why did they "invent" the souls of the dead, with whom they entered into imaginary relations? From thunder people could conceal themselves, from the terror of death they could run away, but they invented an eternal and powerful being, on which they consider themselves to be dependent, and the living souls of the dead, not through fear alone, but for some other reason. It is in these reasons that, obviously, the essence of what is called religion is contained. Besides, every man who at any time, be it only in childhood, has experienced the religious feeling, knows from his personal experience that this feeling has always been evoked in him, not by external, terrible material phenomena, but by an internal consciousness of his insignificance, solitude, and sinfulness, which has nothing in common with the fear of the incomprehensible forces of Nature. And so a man may know from external observation and from personal experience that religion is not a worship of divinities, provoked by a superstitious fear of the unknown forces of Nature, which is proper to men only in a certain period of their evolution, but something quite independent of fear and the degree of a man's culture, and something which cannot be destroyed by any evolution of enlightenment, because man's recognition of his finiteness amidst an infinite world, and of his sinfulness, that is, of the non-fulfilment of everything he could and should do, but has not done, has always existed, and will always exist so long as man remains man.

Indeed, as soon as a man leaves his animal condition of babyhood and first childhood, during which time he lives only by being guided by those demands which present themselves to his animal nature, and as soon as he awakens to a rational consciousness, he cannot help but notice that everything about him lives, renewing itself, without dying, and unswervingly submitting to one definite, eternal law, and that only he alone, in recognizing himself as a distinct being from the rest of the world, is doomed to death, to disappearance in unlimited space and infinite time, and to the agonizing consciousness of responsibility for his acts, that is, to the consciousness that, having acted badly, he might have acted better. Having come to see this, every rational man cannot help but reflect and ask himself what this momentary, indefinite, and wavering existence of his is doing amidst this eternal, firmly established, and infinite world. Upon entering into the true human life, a man cannot avoid this question.

This question always confronts every man, and every man always answers it in one way or another. Now the answer to this question is that which forms the essence of every religion. The essence of every religion consists in nothing but an answer to the question why I live and what my relation is to the infinite world which surrounds me.

And the whole metaphysics of religion, all the doctrines about the divinities, about the origin of the world, are only different symptoms of religion, accompanying it according to the different geographical, ethnographical, and historical conditions. There is not a single religion, from the most exalted to the crudest, which has not for its base this establishment of man's relation to the world around him or to its prime cause. There is not a crude religious rite or a refined cult, which has not the same for its base. Every religious teaching is an expression by the founder of the religion of that relation which he recog-

nizes as existing between himself, as a man, and consequently between all other men, and the world, or its beginning and prime cause.

The expressions of these relations are very varied, in accordance with the ethnographic and historical conditions in which the founder of the religion and the nation adopting it find themselves; besides, these expressions are always differently interpreted and distorted by the followers of the teacher, who anticipates the comprehension of the masses generally for hundreds, and sometimes even for thousands of years; and so there seem to be very many such relations of man to the world, that is, religions, but in reality there are but three fundamental relations of man to the world or to its beginning: (1) the primitive personal, (2) the pagan social, and (3) the Christian, or divine relation.

Strictly speaking, there are but two fundamental relations which man bears toward the world, — the personal one, which consists in the recognition of the meaning of life as being in the good of personality, which may be attained separately or in conjunction with other personalities, and the Christian, which recognizes the meaning of life to consist in serving Him who sent man into the world. Man's second relation to the world — the social one — is in reality nothing but an expansion of the first.

The first of these relations, the most ancient one, which is now found among men standing on the lowest stage of development, consists in this, that man recognizes himself to be a self-sufficient being, which lives in the world for the purpose of acquiring in it the greatest possible personal good, independently of how much the good of other beings may suffer from it.

From this very first relation to the world, in which every child entering into the world finds himself, and in which humanity lived in its first, the pagan stage of its

evolution, and in which now live many separate morally very coarse people and savage nations, result all the ancient pagan religions, as also the lower forms of the later religions in their corrupted form, — Buddhism,[1] Taoism, Mohammedanism, and others. From this same relation results also the modern spiritualism, which has for its base the preservation of personality and of its good. All the pagan cults of deification of beings which enjoy themselves like man, all the sacrifices and prayers for the acquisition of worldly goods, result from this relation to life.

The second pagan relation of man to the world, the social one, which establishes itself at the next stage of evolution, a relation which is more especially characteristic of full-grown men, consists in this, that the significance of life is not recognized in the good of one separate personality, but in the good of a certain aggregate of personalities, — the family, the race, the nation, even humanity (the positivists' attempt at religion).

The meaning of life with this relation of man to the world is transferred from the personality to the family, the race, to a certain aggregate of personalities, whose good is considered by it to be the purpose of existence. From this relation result all the patriarchal and public religions, which are all of one character, — the Chinese and the Japanese religions, the religion of the chosen nation, the Jewish, the state religion of the Romans, the presumptive religion of humanity of the positivists. All the rites of ancestral worship in China and in Japan,

[1] Though Buddhism demands from its followers the renunciation of all the good of the world and of life itself, it is based on the same relation of the self-sufficient personality, which is intended for the good, to the world surrounding it, but with this difference, that simple paganism recognizes man's right to enjoy himself, while Buddhism recognizes the right to avoid suffering. Paganism thinks that the world must serve the good of the individual; while Buddhism thinks that the world must disappear, since it produces the sufferings of personality. Buddhism is only negative paganism. — *Author's Note.*

of the worship of the emperors in Rome, are based on this relation of man to the world.

Man's third relation to the world, the Christian, the one in which involuntarily every old man feels himself to be, and which, in my opinion, is now being entered upon by humanity, consists in this, that the significance of life is no longer cognized by man as consisting in the attainment of his personal purpose or of the purpose of any aggregate of men, but only in the service of that Will which has produced him and the whole world, not for the attainment of his purposes, but of the purposes of this Will.

From this relation to the world results the highest known religious teaching, the germs of which may be found among the Pythagoreans, Therapeutæ, Essenes, among the Egyptians, Persians, Brahmins, Buddhists, and Taoists in their highest representatives, but which received its full and final expression only in Christianity in its true and uncorrupted significance.

All possible religions, whatever they may be, inevitably classify themselves among these three relations of men to the world.

Every man who has left the animal condition inevitably recognizes one of these three relations, and in this recognition does the true religion of every man consist, in spite of the profession to which he nominally counts himself as belonging.

Every man has inevitably some idea about his relation to the world, because a rational being cannot live in the world which surrounds him, without having some relation to it. And since so far only three such relations to the world have been worked out by humanity and are known to us, every man inevitably holds to one of the three existing relations, and, whether he wants or not, belongs to one of these three fundamental religions, among which the whole human race is distributed.

And so the very common assertion of the men of the cultured crowd of the Christian world, that they have risen to such a height of evolution that they no longer are in need of any religion and do not possess it, in reality means this, that these men, in not recognizing the Christian religion, the only one which is proper for our time, are holding to a lower, the public or the primitive pagan religion, without being conscious of the fact. A man without religion, that is, without any relation to the world, is as impossible as a man without a heart. He may not know that he has a religion, just as a man may not know that he has a heart; but a man cannot live without religion, just as he cannot live without a heart.

Religion is that relation which a man recognizes as existing between himself and the infinite world surrounding him, or to its beginning and prime cause, and a rational man cannot help but be in some relation to it.

But you will, perhaps, say that the establishment of man's relation to the world is not the business of religion, but of philosophy, or in general of science, if philosophy is to be considered a part of it. I do not think so. I think, on the contrary, that the assumption that science in general, including philosophy in it, is able to establish man's relation to the world is quite faulty and serves as the chief cause of that confusion of ideas concerning religion, science, and morality, which exists in the cultured strata of our society.

Science, with the inclusion of philosophy, cannot establish any relation of man to the infinite world or to its beginning, for the simple reason that before any philosophy or science could have originated, there had already to exist that without which no activity of the mind and no relation whatsoever of man to the world are possible.

Just as no man can by means of any movement find the direction in which he is to move, while every motion inevitably takes place in some direction, so it is impos-

sible by means of the mental labour of philosophy or science to find the direction in which this labour is to be performed, whereas every mental labour has inevitably to be performed in some one given direction. Such a direction is for every mental work always pointed out by religion. All philosophies known to us, beginning with Plato and ending with Schopenhauer, have inevitably always followed the direction given to them by religion. The philosophy of Plato and of his followers was a pagan philosophy, which investigated the means for the attainment of the highest good for the separate personality, as also for the aggregate of personalities in the state. The mediæval philosophy, which resulted from the same pagan conception of life, investigated the means for the salvation of the personality, that is, for the attainment of the highest good of the personality in the future life, and only in its theocratic endeavours did it treat about the structure of societies.

Modern philosophy, both Hegel's and Comte's, has for its basis the social religious concept of life. Schopenhauer's and Hartmann's philosophy of pessimism, which wanted to free itself from the Jewish religious world-conception, involuntarily fell a prey to the religious foundations of Buddhism. Philosophy has always been and will always be an investigation of what results from man's relation to the world as established by religion, because previous to the establishment of this relation there does not exist any material for the philosophic investigation.

Even so it is with positive science in the narrower sense of this word. Such a science has always been and always will be nothing but an investigation and study of all those subjects and phenomena which present themselves as subject to investigation, in consequence of a certain relation of man to the world, as established by religion.

Science has always been and always will be, not the

study of "everything," as men of science naïvely think now (that, indeed, is impossible, since there are an infinite number of subjects for investigation), but only of that which religion in regular order and according to the degree of its importance segregates from the infinite number of subjects, phenomena, and conditions that are subject to investigation. And so there is not merely one science, but there are as many sciences as there are degrees of the development of religion. Every religion segregates a certain circle of subjects of investigation, and so the science of every separate time and nation inevitably bears the character of the religion from the standpoint from which it views the subject.

Thus the pagan science which was resuscitated during the Renascence, and which even now flourishes in our society, has always been and continues to be nothing but an investigation of all those conditions under which a man receives the highest good, and of all those phenomena of the world which can furnish it. The Brahmin and the Buddhistic philosophic sciences have always been nothing but an investigation of those conditions under which a man is freed from the sufferings which crush him. The Jewish science (Talmud) has always been nothing but the study and elucidation of those conditions which must be observed by a man, in order to fulfil his compact with God and keep the chosen people on the height of its calling. The true Christian science, the one which is just germinating, is the investigation of those conditions under which man can know the demands of the higher Will which sent him, and apply them to life.

Neither philosophy nor science can establish man's relations to the world, because such a relation must be established before any philosophy or science can begin. They cannot yet do so, for this other reason also, because science, with the inclusion of philosophy, investigates phenomena intellectually and independently of the posi-

tion of the investigator and of the sensations experienced by him. But man's relation to the world is not defined by reason alone, but also by feeling, by the whole aggregate of man's spiritual forces. No matter how much people may try to make it clear to a man that everything in existence is only ideas, that everything consists of atoms, or that the essence of life is substance or will, or that heat, light, motion, electricity are different manifestations of one and the same energy, all that will not explain to him, a feeling, suffering, rejoicing, fearing, and hoping being, his place in the universe. Such a place, and so his relation to the world, is pointed out to him only by religion, which says to him: "The universe exists for you, and so take from this life everything you can take from it;" or: "You are a member of the nation which is beloved by God, so serve this nation, do everything prescribed by God, and you will, together with your nation, receive the highest possible good;" or: "You are a tool of the highest Will, which sent you into the world for the purpose of doing the work laid out for you, so get acquainted with this Will and do it, and you will do for yourself the best you can do."

For the comprehension of the data of philosophy and of science, preparation and study are necessary; for the religious comprehension this is not necessary: it is given to every man, even though he be most limited in compresion and most ignorant.

For a man to know his relation to the surrounding world or to its beginning, he does not need any philosophical or scientific knowledge, — a mass of knowledge, by clogging consciousness, is often only in its way, — but only a renunciation of the vanity of the world, even though but for a time, the consciousness of his material insignificance, and righteousness, which is most frequently found, as it says in the Gospel, among children and the simplest, least informed men. For this reason we see

that frequently the simplest, most uncultured, and uneducated people quite clearly, consciously, and easily accept the highest Christian life-conception, while the most learned and cultured of people continue to persist in the crudest paganism. Thus, for example, we see the most refined and highly cultured people assume the meaning of life to consist in personal enjoyment or in the liberation of self from sufferings, as was assumed by the very clever and highly cultured Schopenhauer, while a half-educated Russian peasant sectarian, without the slightest effort, takes the meaning of life to consist in the same that the greatest sages of the world, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, took it to consist in, — in the recognition of oneself as the tool of God's will, as the son of God.

But you will ask me: In what does the essence of this unscientific and unphilosophical method of cognition consist? If this cognition is not philosophical and not scientific, what is it? By what is it defined? To these questions I can reply only this, that, since the religious cognition is that on which every other is based, and that which precedes every other cognition, we cannot define it, since we have for it no instrument of definition. In theological parlance this cognition is called revelation. And this appellation, if we do not ascribe to the word "revelation" any false meaning, is quite exact, because this cognition is acquired, not through study, nor through the efforts of an individual person or of individual persons, but only through the comprehension by an individual man or by individual men of the manifestation of infinite reason, which gradually reveals itself to men.

Why could not men ten thousand years ago comprehend that the meaning of their lives is not exhausted by the good of the personality, and why did there then come a time when the higher conception of life, the social, national, political, was revealed to men? Why has the Christian life-conception been revealed to men within our

historical memory? Why was it revealed to such a man or men, in such and such a time, in such and such a place, in such and such a form? To try to answer these questions, by finding the causes of this life-conception in the historical conditions of the time, life, and character of those people who were the first to make it their own and to express it, — in the peculiar properties of these men, — is the same as trying to answer the question as to why the rising sun first lighted up such objects and no other. The sun of truth, rising higher and higher above the world, illuminates it more and more, and is reflected on those objects which first come under the illumination of the sun's rays and which are most capable of reflecting them. But the qualities which make certain men more capable of receiving this rising truth are not any special active properties of the mind, but, on the contrary, passive qualities of the heart, which rarely coincide with a great and curious mind, — renunciation of the vanity of the world, the recognition of his material insignificance, righteousness, as we see it in the case of all the founders of religion, who never were distinguished for any philosophic or scientific attainments.

In my opinion, the chief error, which more than any other interferes with the true progress of our Christian humanity, consists in this, that the men of science in our time, who are sitting in the seat of Moses, are guided by the pagan world-conception, which was regenerated during the Renascence, and have decided that Christianity is a condition which people have outlived, and that, on the contrary, that pagan, social, antique conception of life, which humanity has actually outlived, and to which they hold, is the highest conception of life, and one which humanity ought unswervingly to profess. With this they not only do not understand the true Christianity, which forms that higher life-conception toward which all humanity moves, but even do not try to understand it.

The chief source of this misunderstanding consists in this, that the men of science, differing from Christianity and seeing the lack of correspondence between their science and Christianity, have found guilty of it, not their science, but Christianity; that is, they have considered not what is the fact, namely, that their science is eighteen hundred years behind Christianity, which has already taken possession of a great part of modern society, but that Christianity has fallen behind science for eighteen hundred years.

From this exchange of rôles arises that striking phenomenon that no people have more confused conceptions about the essence of the true significance of religions, about religion, about morality, about life, than the men of science; and a still more striking phenomenon is this, that the science of our time, which in its field of the investigation of the conditions of the material world has indeed accomplished great results, has appeared as quite useless in the life of men, and sometimes even produces harmful results.

And so I think that it is not philosophy and not science, but religion that establishes man's relation to the world.

And so, in response to your first question, as to what I understand by the word "religion," I will say: religion is a certain relation which is established by man between himself and the eternal, infinite world, or its beginning and prime cause.

From this answer to the first question naturally results the answer to the second:

If religion is an established relation between man and the world, which determines the meaning of his life, morality is the indication and elucidation of that activity of man which naturally results from this or that relation of man to the world. But since we know only two such

fundamental relations to the world or to its beginning, if we consider the pagan social relation as an expansion of the personal, or three, if we consider the pagan social relation separately, there exist but three moral teachings: the primitive savage moral teaching, the pagan personal, or social, moral teaching, and the Christian moral teaching, that is, the service of God, or the divine teaching.

From man's first relation to the world arise the moral teaching common to all the pagan religions, which have for their basis the striving after the good of the separate personality, and which, therefore, define all the conditions which give the highest good to the personality and point out the means for the attainment of this good. From this relation to the world result the Epicurean moral teaching in its lowest manifestation, the Mohammedan teaching or morality, which promises a gross good to the personality in this world and in the world to come, and the teaching of the worldly utilitarian morality, which has for its aim only the good of the personality in this world.

From the same teaching, which regards as the aim of life the good of the individual person, and so liberation from the sufferings of the personality, arises the moral teaching of Buddhism in its gross form, and the worldly teaching of pessimism.

From the second, the pagan relation of man to the world, which sets as the aim of life the good of a certain aggregate of personalities, there result the moral teachings which demand of man the service to this aggregate, whose good is recognized to be the aim of life. According to this teaching the enjoyment of the personal good is admitted only to the extent to which it is acquired by the whole aggregate which forms the religious foundation of life. From this relation to the world arise the familiar moral teachings of the ancient Roman and Greek worlds, where the personality always sacrificed itself for society,

and such is also the Chinese morality; from this same relation arises the Jewish morality, — the subordination of one's good to the good of the chosen nation, and the morality of our time, which demands the sacrifices of the personality for the conventional good of the majority. From the same relation to the universe arises the morality of the majority of women, who sacrifice their personalities for the good of the family, and chiefly of their children.

All ancient history, and partly mediæval and modern history, is full of descriptions of the exploits of this domestic-social morality. And in our time the majority of men, who imagine that, by professing Christianity, they are practising Christian morality, in reality follow nothing but the pagan morality, and this morality they take as the ideal of the education of the younger generation.

From the third, the Christian relation to the world, which consists in man's recognition of himself as a tool of the higher will for the fulfilment of its purposes, there result the moral teachings corresponding to this comprehension of life, which elucidate man's dependence on the higher will, and which determine the demands of this will. From this relation of man to the world result all the higher moral teachings known to humanity, — the Pythagorean, Stoic, Buddhistic, Brahmin, Taoist, in their highest manifestations, and the Christian in its true meaning, which demands the renunciation of the personal will, and not only of the personal, but also of the domestic and the social good, for the sake of doing the will of Him who sent us into this life, as revealed to us in our consciousness. From this second or third relation to the infinite world or its beginning arises the true, unhypocritical morality of every man, independently of what he nominally professes or preaches as morality, or what he wants to seem.

Thus in the case of a man who recognizes the essence of his relation to the world to be the acquisition of the

highest good for himself, no matter how much he may say about considering it moral to live for the family, for society, for the state, for humanity, or for the fulfilment of God's will, may artfully dissemble before people, deceiving them, the real motive of his activity will always be only the good of his personality, so that, when the necessity of the choice presents itself, he will not sacrifice his personality for the family, for the state, for the fulfilment of God's will, but will sacrifice everything for himself, because, seeing the meaning of his life only in the good of his personality, he cannot act differently, so long as he does not change his relation to the world.

Similarly, no matter how much a man, whose relation to the world consists in serving his family (women are preëminently such), or his race, his nation (such are the men of the oppressed nationalities or politicians in the time of struggle), may say that he is a Christian, his morality will always be either domestic or national, but not Christian, and when the necessity comes of choosing between the domestic, the social, and the personal good, or between the social good and the fulfilment of God's will, he will inevitably choose the service of the good of that aggregate of men for which he exists, according to his world-conception, because only in this service does he see the meaning of his life. And similarly, no matter how much a man who takes his relation to the world to consist in the fulfilment of the will of Him who sent him, may be impressed with the idea that he should, in conformity with the demands of personality, family, the nation, humanity, commit acts that are contrary to this higher will, which is cognized by him in the name of the qualities of reason and love implanted in him, he will always sacrifice all his human ties only not to transgress the will of Him who sent him, because only in the fulfilment of this will does he see the meaning of his life.

Morality cannot be independent of religion, because it

is not only the consequence of religion, that is, of the relation which a man recognizes himself to have to the world, but is already included, implied, in religion. Every religion is an answer to the question as to what constitutes the meaning of one's life. And the religious answer includes a certain moral demand which at times may arise after the explanation of the meaning of life, and at times before it. In response to the question as to the meaning of life we may say: the meaning of life is in the good of personality, and so enjoy all the goods that are accessible to you; or: the meaning of life is in the good of a certain group of men, and so serve this group with all your strength; or: the meaning of life is in the doing of the will of Him who sent you, and so try with all your strength to know this will and to do it. The same question may also be answered as follows: the meaning of your life is in your personal enjoyment, because in this does man's destiny lie; or: the meaning of your life is in the service of that aggregate of which you consider yourself to be a member, because in this does your destiny lie; or: the meaning of your life is in the service of God, because in this does your destiny lie.

Morality is contained in the explanation of life as given by religion, and so it can in no way be separated from religion. This truth is particularly evident in the attempts of the non-Christian philosophers to deduce the teaching of the highest morality from their philosophy. These philosophers see that the Christian philosophy is indispensable, that it is impossible to live without it; more than that: they see that it exists, and they want in some way to connect it with their non-Christian philosophy and even to represent matters in such a form as though the Christian philosophy resulted from their pagan or social philosophy. This they try to do, but it is these very attempts that more obviously than anything else show, not only the independence of the Christian morality, but

even the complete contradiction between it and the pagan philosophy.

The Christian ethics, the one which we recognize in consequence of our religious world-conception, not only demands the sacrifice of the personality for the aggregate of personalities, but also the renunciation of one's own personality and of the aggregate of personalities for the purpose of serving God; but the pagan philosophy investigates only the means for attaining the greatest good of the personality or of the aggregate of personalities, and so the contradiction is inevitable. In order to conceal this contradiction, there is but one means, — and that is, to heap abstract conventional concepts upon one another. Thus preëminently have acted the philosophers since the time of the Renascence, and to this circumstance — to the impossibility of harmonizing the demands of the Christian morality, which is assumed in advance as given, with philosophy, which starts from pagan foundations — has to be ascribed that terrible abstraction, obscurity, incomprehensibility, and estrangement from life, which are displayed by the modern philosophy. With the exception of Spinoza, who in his philosophy, in spite of his not being a Christian, starts from truly Christian foundations, and of ingenious Kant, who established his ethics independently of his metaphysics, all the other philosophers, even brilliant Schopenhauer, apparently invent an artificial connection between their ethics and their metaphysics.

It is felt that the Christian ethics is something given in advance, which stands quite firmly and independently of philosophy and is in no need of the fictitious supports which are put under it, and that philosophy only invents such propositions that the given ethics may not contradict it, but may combine with it and, as it were, result from it. But all these propositions seem to justify the Christian ethics only so long as they are viewed in the

abstract. The moment they are applied to questions of practical life, not only the disagreement, but even the obvious contradiction, between the philosophic bases with what we consider to be morality comes out in full force.

Unfortunate Nietzsche, who has of late become so famous, is precious in so far as he points out this contradiction. He is incontrovertible, when he says that all the rules of morality, from the standpoint of the existing non-Christian philosophy, are nothing but lying and hypocrisy, and that it is more advantageous, more agreeable, and more rational for people to form a society of *Uebermenschen* and be such, than to be that crowd which must serve only as a scaffolding for these *Uebermenschen*. No structures of philosophy, which starts from the pagan philosophical world-conception, can prove to man that it is more advantageous and rational for him to live, not for his desirable, comprehensible, and possible good, or for the good of his family, his society, but for a foreign, undesirable, and incomprehensible good, which is inaccessible by any human insignificant means. A philosophy which is based on the comprehension of life as to be contained in the good of man will never be able to prove to a rational man, who knows that he may die any moment, that it is good and proper for him to renounce his desirable, comprehensible, and undoubted good, not even for the good of others, because he can never know what the consequences from his sacrifice will be, but only because it is proper and good, because it is a categorical imperative.

It is impossible to prove this from the standpoint of pagan philosophy. To prove that all men are equal, that it is better for a man to give his life in the service of others than to make other men serve him, by treading on their lives, it is necessary differently to define one's relation to the world: it is necessary to prove that man's position is such that he has nothing else to do, because the meaning of his life is only in the fulfilment of the will

of Him who sent him; but the will of Him who sent him is that he should give his life for the service of men. It is only religion which makes this change in man's relation to the world.

The same is true of the attempts to deduce Christian morality from the fundamental positions of pagan science, and to harmonize the two. No sophisms and no sinuosities of thought will destroy the simple and obvious position that the law of evolution, which lies at the foundation of the whole science of our time, is based on a general, eternal, and unchangeable law, on the law of the struggle for existence and of the survival of the fittest, and that, therefore, every man, for the attainment of his good or of the good of his society, must be this fittest and must make his society such, in order that not he and not his society, but some other, less fitted one, may perish.

No matter how much certain naturalists, who have become frightened at the logical conclusions from this law, and from their application to human life, may try to bury this law under words and circumvent it, all their attempts only show more obviously the ineradicability of this law, which guides the life of the whole organic world, and so also of man viewed as an animal.

Just as I was writing this, there appeared a Russian translation of Mr. Huxley's article, composed from a late lecture of his on evolution and ethics, which he delivered before some English society.

In this article the learned professor, like our well-known Professor Bekétov and many others who have written on the same subject with the same lack of success as their predecessors, tries to prove that the struggle for existence does not impair morality, and that with the recognition of the law of the struggle for existence as the fundamental law of life, morality can not only exist, but even be perfected. Mr. Huxley's article is full of all kinds of jests, verses, and general considerations of the

religion and the philosophy of the ancients, and in consequence of this is so full of flourishes, and so confused, that it is only with great difficulty that one can get at its fundamental idea. This idea is as follows: the law of evolution is contrary to the law of morality,— this was known to the ancients, both of the Greek and of the Indian world. The philosophy and the religion of the two nations brought them to the teaching of self-renunciation. This teaching, according to the author's view, is incorrect, and this is what is correct: there exists a law, which the author calls the cosmic law, according to which all beings fight among themselves, and only the fittest survives. Man, too, is subject to this law, and only thanks to this law has man developed into what he now is. But this law is contrary to morality. How is this law to be harmonized with morality? Like this: there exists a social progress, which strives to retard the cosmic and to substitute for it another process, the ethical, whose purpose is no longer the survival of the fittest, but of the best in the ethical sense. Mr. Huxley does not explain whence comes this ethical process, but in the nineteenth note he says that the basis of this progress consists in this, that on the one hand men, like the animals, themselves like to be in society, and repress in themselves the property which is detrimental for society, and on the other, the members of society forcibly suppress the acts which are contrary to the good of society. It appears to Mr. Huxley that this process, which causes people to bridle their passions for the preservation of the aggregate of which they are members, and the fear of being punished for the violation of the orders of the aggregate, are the same ethical law, the existence of which he has to prove.

Morality is something constantly developing and growing, and so the non-violation of the established rules of a certain society, their retention by any external means, of which Mr. Huxley speaks as of tools of morality, will not

only fail to be a confirmation, but will even be a violation of morality. Every cannibal who stops eating his like, and acts in conformity with this, will violate the order of his society. And it is unquestionable that every truly moral act, which advances morality, will always be a violation of the habits of society. And so, if in society there has appeared a law according to which men sacrifice their advantages for the preservation of the integrity of their society, this law is not an ethical law, but, on the contrary, generally a law which is opposed to every ethics, the same law of the struggle for existence, only in a latent condition. It is the same struggle for existence, only that it is transferred from the units to their aggregate. It is not the cessation of fighting, but the swinging of the hand in order to strike more powerfully.

If the law of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest is an eternal law of everything living (and it cannot be viewed otherwise in the case of man considered as an animal), no confused reflections concerning the social progress and the ethical law, which, like the *deus ex machina*, leaping out no one knows whence, is supposed to result from it, can impair this law.

If social progress, as Mr. Huxley asserts, collects people into groups, the same struggle and the same survival will take place among families, tribes, nations, and this struggle will not only not be more moral, but will be much more cruel and immoral, than the struggle of individuals, as we see to be the case in reality.

If we assume the impossible, namely, that all humanity will in a thousand years, through the one social progress, be united into one whole, will form one nation and one state, even then, to say nothing of the fact that the struggle, made void between the nations, will pass into the struggle between humanity and the world of animals, struggle will always remain struggle, that is, an activity which radically excludes the possibility of the Christian

morality as recognized by us. To say nothing of this, even then the struggle between the individuals forming aggregates, and between the aggregates of families, tribes, nationalities, will not in the least be diminished, but will only take place in another form, as we see in all the combinations of men into social groups. Members of a family quarrel and struggle among themselves as much as outsiders, and frequently more savagely and more furiously.

Similarly in the state: among the men who live in the state there is continued the same struggle as among the men living outside the state, only under different forms. If the feeble are saved in the family and in the state, this does not happen at all in consequence of their social union, but because among the men united into families and states there is self-sacrifice and love. If outside the family only the fittest of two children survives, while in the family, with a good mother, both will remain alive, this is not at all due to the combination of men into families, but because mothers have love and self-sacrifice. But neither self-sacrifice nor love can in any way result from social progress.

To assert that social progress produces morality is the same as to assert that the construction of stoves produces heat.

Heat is produced by the sun, and stoves produce heat only when wood, that is, sun's work, is put into them. Similarly morality results from religion, while the special forms of life produce morality only when into these forms of life have been put the consequences of the religious influence upon people, — morality.

Fires may be made in stoves, and then they will give heat, or no fires may be made in them, and then they will remain cold; similarly the social forms may include morality and then morally affect society, or not include morality and then remain without any effect upon society.

Christian morality cannot be based on the pagan comprehension of life, and cannot be deduced from philosophy, nor from non-Christian science; it not only cannot be deduced from them, but cannot even be harmonized with them.

Thus every serious, severe, consistent philosophy and science have always understood the matter. "If our propositions do not agree with morality, so much the worse for it," quite correctly say such philosophy and science, and they continue to carry on their investigations.

Ethical treatises, which are not based on religion, and even lay catechisms are written and taught, and people may imagine that humanity is guided by them, but that only seems so, because in reality men are not guided by these treatises and catechisms, but by religion, which they have always had, while the treatises and catechisms only imitate what naturally results from religion.

The prescriptions of the lay morality that are not based on the religious teaching are very much like what a man would do if, not knowing music, he should take the director's place and swing his arms in front of the musicians doing their usual work. The music, thanks to inertia and to what the musicians have learned from previous directors, would last a little while longer; but it is evident that the swaying of the baton by him who does not know music would not only not be useful, but would in time certainly confuse the musicians and break up the orchestra. A similar confusion is beginning to take place in the minds of the men of our time, in consequence of the attempts of the leaders to teach a morality which is not based on that higher religion which is being adopted and partly is already adopted by the Christian morality. The attempts at founding a morality outside of religion are like what children do, when, wishing to transplant a plant to which they have taken a fancy, they tear off the root, which they do not like and which seems super-

fluous, and without the root stick the plant into the ground. Without a religious foundation there can be no real, sincere morality, just as without a root there can be no real plant.

And so, replying to your two questions, I say: "Religion is a certain relation, established by man, of his separate personality to the infinite world or to its beginning; but morality is a constant guide of life, resulting from this relation."